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FRATRICIDE IN BATHINDA

## Four Army jawans die in firing at military station

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DATA POINT

## *Karnataka has many of India's richest MLAs*

*They have, on average, assets worth ₹34.6 crore*

OPINION » PAGE 7

TO THE FORE

## Ashwin's allround show helps RR pip CSK

SPORT » PAGE 13

# India sees over 7,800 COVID cases in a day

Surge will continue for the next 10 days, says Health Ministry but urges people not to panic as the variant is not triggering severe infection

**Bindu Shajan Perappadan**
NEW DELHI

**Ready anytime:** A drill under way at a hospital in Lucknow on Wednesday to check COVID preparedness. SANDEEP SAXENA

XBB.1.16, a subvariant of Omicron, is responsible for the current surge in COVID-19 cases, but this is not a cause for worry as the severity of the variant is currently below average, with fewer hospitalisations, a top Health Ministry official said on Wednesday.

India has been registering a steady surge in COVID-19 cases for over two weeks now. The official added that there will be a further rise in cases for the next eight-10 days, after which a decline is expected. "Caution and not panic is the way out," he said.

"The Ministry source said the current surge is not a "wave" but rather an "endemic cycle" of COVID-19. While Omicron and its sub-lineages continue to be dominant variant, most of the assigned variants have little or no significant disease severity.

India on Wednesday morning reported 7,830 fresh cases in the last 24 hours, the highest in over seven months, according to Health Ministry figures.

"The XBB.1.16 subvariant of Omicron, which is driving the latest surge, is not a cause for worry and vaccines are effective against it," said the source.

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# In bid to forge ties for 2024, Nitish, Tejashwi call on Cong. leaders

**Sandeep Phukan**
NEW DELHI

Nitish Kumar with Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi. ANI

Taking the first step to build a united Opposition to take on the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha election, JD(U) supremo and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, along with his deputy, the RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday.

Mr. Gandhi, in a tweet, called the meeting a historic first step to "stand together and fight together for the sake of country".

Sources told *The Hindu* that Mr. Kumar and Mr. Yadav, who spent over an hour and a half at Mr. Kharge's residence, focused on getting together as many parties as possible and working out a common political programme.

Mr. Kumar and Mr. Yadav later called on AAP convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who welcomed "Nitish*ji*'s initiative for change of government at the Centre".

The series of meetings also comes amid reports that Mr. Kumar could be made convener of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), in a bid to rope in more parties and put up joint candidates against the BJP in the 2024 polls.

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NEARBY

## BJP faces heat from unhappy ticket aspirants

BENGALURU
The ruling BJP is facing the heat of rebellion and heartburn by the disappointed ticket aspirants close on the heels of the party releasing its first list of candidates comprising 189 names. » Page 4

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# Consumer inflation eases to 5.66% in March

**Vikas Dhoot**
NEW DELHI

India's retail inflation slid below the 6% mark for the first time in 2023 – and only the third time in the last 15 months – to touch 5.66% in March 2023. The drop was aided by base effects, as the same month had recorded an almost 7% price rise last year.

March's inflation level was last seen in December 2021, following which prices rose at a pace faster than the Central bank's upper tolerance threshold of 6% for 10 months in a row.

Despite the moderation in the last month of the fiscal year, Indian consumers faced an average inflation of 6.66% through 2022-23.

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## Man killed by brother-in-law for marrying without consent

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

In a suspected case of honour killing, a 28-year-old newly married marketing executive was allegedly hacked to death by his brother-in-law and friends near BGS School on the outskirts of the city in broad daylight on Tuesday afternoon.

While Ashwath was killed on the spot, his wife Sahana, sister of the accused Bharath, sustained injuries after the accused attacked her with a chopper while she was riding on the motorcycle with her husband, said the police.

The deceased along with his parents and friends had gone to a family programme and was returning on the bike, while others were moving ahead on other two-wheelers.

Suddenly, Bharath and his friends confronted Ashwath and attacked him with a chopper.

As a result, Ashwath and Sahana fell from the bike. The accused stabbed Ashwath multiple times, and inflicted serious injuries on his head with a stone.

Meanwhile, Ashwath's friends reached the spot and tried to intervene.

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# HC allows family of three cancer patients to alienate their land even though it is notified for acquisition

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Coming to the rescue of a family, three members of which are suffering from cancer, and one a psychic patient, the High Court of Karnataka allowed them to either alienate or encumber 50% of their total 2 acres 3 guntas land even though the entire land is notified for acquisition by the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB).

"When the life of a citizen depends upon certain property, the delay that would eventually brook in payment of compensation for the acquired land, in the given circumstances of the case in particular, would metaphorically amount to taking away the oxygen mask from the gasping patient in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU)," the court observed.

**Right to life**

If the right to life is violated when means of livelihood is taken away, the High Court said, "restraining a person from alienating his property for the raising of funds required for medical treatment of a terminal disease, is nothing short of that [of taking away the oxygen mask]."

"The writ courts being the custodians of constitutional rights of the citizens, have to individualise justice by striking a golden balance between the competing claims of individuals and the State. Otherwise, a Constitution would be a mere compendium of theories with no connect to the living law of the people," the court observed.

Justice Krishna S. Dixit passed the order while disposing of a petition filed by T.G. Shanthamma (72), her three sons, and a daughter.

**Source of income**

Ms. Shanthamma and her two sons are suffering from cancer and another son is a psychic patient. Her daughter, Usha H.R., is taking care of all of them with her husband but she is finding no sufficient source of income for their treatment and to repay the loan borrowed earlier from a cooperative society for the treatment by mortgaging family's Bengaluru property, where they are living.

The family members knocked on the doors of the court as the KIADB, which had in 2021 notified for the acquisition of their land, situated at Hulikunte village, Doddabelavangala hobli, Doddaballapur taluk, has not responded to their plea for payment of at least 50% of the proposed compensation amount (at the rate of around ₹1.6 crore per acre) to enable them to clear their loan and for availing treatment.

During the hearing, petitioners' advocate Gireesha Kodgi told the court said that his clients would be satisfied even if they were permitted to alienate or encumber the land as they need money urgently for treatment as KIADB has told the court that it cannot give part of the compensation as the acquisition process would take more time.

**Medical treatment**

Accepting this alternative plea, the court said, "If the petitioners are not permitted to encumber or alienate the property, they may fall prey to the predatory disease of the kind..."

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

### Retail inflation declines in March due to drop in food prices

**5.66** In percentage. Government data showed that the retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) was reduced from 6.44% in February 2023. The RBI has projected CPI inflation at 5.3% for FY2023-24. PTI

### The funds disbursed by Andhra CM under YSR EBC Nestham

**659** in ₹ crore. The amount disbursed will benefit 4.3 lakh women. Under the Nestham scheme, the State government will extend financial help of ₹15,000 per annum for three years to women aged between 45 and 60 years. PTI

### The surge in solar and wind energy which created a record

**12** In percentage. The record growth in wind and solar drove emissions intensity of the world's electricity to its lowest ever level in 2022, according to climate and energy think tank Ember. Renewable sources accounted for 39% of world electricity. AFP

### Migrants and refugees drowned crossing the Mediterranean in 2023

**400** migrants. The migrant deaths, documented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), happened while the refugees were attempting to cross the central Mediterranean from North Africa to Europe. REUTERS

### Asia's growth to be faster than developed economies

**5** In percentage. China's easing of COVID-19 curbs, a strong domestic demand and interest rates staying in less-restrictive territory would drive economic growth in Asia, according to Morgan Stanley economists. REUTERS

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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# The role of Parliamentary Committees

Due to the sheer volume of information and scale of operations that the Indian Parliament is required to undertake, it is not feasible to take up all issues on the floor of the House. Thus, Parliamentary committees are constituted to delve deeper into matters of public concern and develop expert opinion

BACKGROUNDER

Kashvi Verma
Amrit Mahapatra

ISTOCKPHOTO

The former President of the U.S. Woodrow Wilson once remarked, 'It is not far from the truth to say that Congress in session is Congress on public exhibition, whilst Congress in Committee rooms is Congress at work.' The universality of this statement seems to have stood the test of time and geography.

Due to the sheer volume of information and scale of operations that the Indian Parliament is required to undertake, it is not feasible to take up all issues on the floor of the House. Thus, Parliamentary committees – panels made up of MPs – are constituted to deal with such situations and take up sector-specific concerns. Contrary to popular perception, looking into Bills is not the only purpose that committees serve. We tend to underestimate their relevance, not realising the sheer magnitude of effort that goes into making Parliament a dynamic, functional space where members converge every few months and debate on matters that concern the nation. Behind every such speech, every comment and every Bill introduced or taken up for discussion lies the ceaseless work of various committees that deserve a nuanced perusal if we are to understand how the highest platform of multilateral dialogue in India is brought to life.

However, in these times of political rancour and polarisation, public proceedings of the House seem to reflect serious fault lines. It does not allow for any deliberation, let alone consensus. During the course of the 17th Lok Sabha, only 14 Bills have been referred for further examination so far. As per data from PRS, as little as 25% of the Bills introduced were referred to committees in the 16th Lok Sabha, as compared to 71% and 60% in the 15th and 14th Lok Sabha respectively. This represents a declining trend of national legislation being subjected to expert scrutiny.

### The evolution of committees

Even though a structured committee system was only established in 1993, individual committees were being formed for various reasons as far back as independence. For instance, five of the many crucial committees of the Constituent Assembly are worth a mention here.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Citizenship Clause, as the name suggests, was formed to discuss the nature and scope of Indian citizenship.

Two other very significant committees were the Northeast Frontier (Assam) Tribal and Excluded Areas Sub-Committee (July 28, 1947) and the Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas (Other than Assam) Sub-Committee (August 18, 1947). The former, chaired by Sh. G.N. Bordoloi, covered the Naga, Khasi, Garo, Jaintia and Mikir Hills and collected a reservoir of people's lived experiences and demands, beliefs and customs. It looked at the status of land and forests, local government and courts, finance and taxation, making its report invaluable for determining the status quo of the region and bestowing rights/privileges accordingly. The latter was characterised by Sh. Jaipal Singh Munda's Minute of Dissent with regard to scheduled areas in the Chhota Nagpur Plateau. A towering Adivasi leader, Munda objected to the exclusion of Manbhum, Hazaribagh and Palamau districts from the ambit of the report. He claimed that all the witnesses had been "emphatic" that all six districts in question must form a consolidated territory for the purposes of scheduling. Not just for administrative reasons but also to protect the interests of the 14,79,485 Adivasis inhabiting the three excluded districts from the veto of the Tribes Advisory Council. Sh. A.V. Thakkar, the Chairman, took note of the Minute but concluded that it lacked merit and "the award of the Boundary Commission is unalterable".

Then there was the Expert Committee on Financial Provisions of the Union Constitution (December 5, 1947), which was responsible for giving recommendations on Union and Province (State) tax collection, central excise duty, liquor revenue, divisible pool of income tax, sharing of proceeds among provinces, residuary powers, and the institutions of the Finance Commission and the Auditor General, among other things. Finally, the Advisory Committee on the Subject of Political Safeguards for Minorities (May 11, 1949), chaired by Sardar Patel, looked at the abolition of reservations for religious minorities.

So, in essence, committees have been doing monumental work since the unveiling of independent India. Today, both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha have their own Standing (permanent) Committees and Ad Hoc (need-based) Committees. There are also Joint Committees with representation from both Houses.

### The role of committees

Committees go into the details of a specific piece of legislation, analyse the impact it may have on governance indicators, and then make their recommendations. The government is required to table an 'Action Taken' report for the House to judge the progress made on the suggestions of the committee. Even though committee reports aren't binding on the government, it helps the legislature ensure an oversight on the executive. For instance, during the recently concluded Budget Session, reports tabled on the Demand for Grants highlighted certain inconsistencies on the part of the government. The Committee on Rural Development & Panchayati Raj in its report noted that the revised estimates always fell short of the budget estimates. More importantly, the actual figures are also way less. In 2022-23, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been able to spend only ₹701 crore out of the allocation of ₹905 crore, approximately, at the revised estimates stage. Such objective assessments are only possible in the confines of a committee room, where partisan divides dissolve to make way for consensus. The alternative scenario, that is discussion on the floor of the House, involves glaring cameras that nudge parliamentarians to perform as per their respective party-lines and voter-base. There also exists the Business Advisory Committee which prepares the entire schedule of both Houses when Parliament is in session. Interestingly, papers laid on the table of the House – something we often tend not to pay attention to – have a whole committee dedicated to them. So, the seemingly insignificant few minutes at the very beginning of each sitting which are utilised to lay said papers are actually backed by a well-oiled machinery of members. Each individual paper is prepared after a careful and often long-drawn process of deliberation, writing and screening. A lot goes into the functioning of Parliament and the committees shoulder a big chunk of that responsibility.

### Current progress

Perhaps the most salient work done by a committee in recent years is on the Digital Data Protection Bill. Beginning in 2017 in the wake of the *Puttaswamy* judgment that recognised privacy as a fundamental right, the Justice Srikrishna Committee was formed and tasked with preparing a data protection framework for India. It presented the final 166-page report in 2018, covering everything from data processing and storage to rights and enforcement – on the basis of which the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019 was tabled in the Lok Sabha. It was referred to another committee, this time a Joint Parliamentary Committee chaired by P.P. Chaudhary, whose report came out in December 2021, following which the bill was withdrawn and a new Draft Digital Data Protection Bill was introduced for public consultation in November 2022. In each iteration, the committees' insights have not only been invaluable but also formed the very basis of what is possibly the single most crucial legislation for a growing economy in the digital age.

But this is not all. Several important laws such as the Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill that seeks to raise the legal marriageable age of women to 21, the Anti-Maritime Piracy Bill that brings into enactment the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea for combating piracy in the high seas, the Jan Vishwas Bill that amends 42 laws across sectors like agriculture and media, the Wildlife Protection (Amendment) Bill that extends the scope of protected species, the Competition (Amendment) Bill, the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, and the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill have all been referred to Committees.

Another important mandate of Committees is to go into issues that are crucial from a nation-building standpoint but don't hold as much political significance. Take the example of defence shipyards. These shipyards are not a primary poll issue. However, it is extremely important to develop these capabilities for safeguarding the security of the nation. While next to no questions have been asked in the Lok Sabha on defence shipyards, the Public Accounts Committee highlighted several concerns plaguing the same in a 2015 report including but not limited to audit findings about inadequate shipbuilding practices, frequent mid-course changes, delays in finalisation of weapon packages, and an underestimation of costs by shipyards.

### The road ahead

In the U.S., committees play a crucial role and Bills are referred to them post introduction for scrutiny. It allows changes to be made and the modified Bill to go for voting.

The Parliament could consider a compulsory referral, for the Bills that are tabled on the floor, to the appropriate committees. Arming them with more powers will help them ensure accountability from the executive instead of making them toothless tigers. It is essential for the parliamentary ecosystem in India to institutionalise such procedures and not allow political considerations to hasten law-making.

*The writers are former LAMP fellows of the 2022-23 batch*

### THE GIST

There has been a declining trend of national legislation being subjected to expert scrutiny. During the course of the 17th Lok Sabha, only 14 Bills have been referred for further examination so far. As per data from PRS, as little as 25% of the Bills introduced were referred to committees in the 16th Lok Sabha, as compared to 71% and 60% in the 15th and 14th Lok Sabha respectively.

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# Gig workers await stricter laws that will protect their rights

The sector is made up of lakhs of workers, and a majority of them say that the government has been unsuccessful so far in resolving their problems, including that of exploitation by their companies

**Pavana J.**
BENGALURU

With the rise of e-commerce platforms, gig workers have now become an inseparable part of a functioning society. FILE PHOTO

Every political party has their own agenda," said Arun V., a delivery partner in his thirties, after completing an order on a hot weekday afternoon. "This time, I hope that these parties include even the welfare of delivery partners in their agendas. A few years ago, we could say that ours was a new sector and people did not know what our needs were. But now, even after openly saying what we need multiple times, they still don't pay attention to us," he said, finding himself in a quandary about which party to vote for.

With the rise of e-commerce platforms, gig workers have now become an inseparable part of a functioning society. The sector is made up of lakhs of workers, of which, a majority say that the government has been unsuccessful so far in resolving their problems, including that of exploitation by their companies. These workers are technically not recognised as employees by the most companies. They are referred to as delivery partners or immediate contractors which keeps them away from the benefits enjoyed by regular employees. Thus, the sector has been demanding for a long time now for the government to bring regulations which will correct this problem.

"Our employers treat us terribly. Sometimes even if we make the slightest mistake, they threaten to fire us or cut our pay. It is easy for them to do that just by sitting in one place while we go around the city toiling ourselves for every penny. I really hope the government comes up with stricter laws for our safety and well-being," said Sharif, a college student who also works as a delivery partner with one of the country's biggest start-ups.

Like many other delivery partners who juggle various commitments, Sharif also manages both his college and the gig work after losing his father to the pandemic.

"We want them to care about our safety and security, like any other sector. They must bring laws that make us feel like we are important to society and the work we do really matters," Arun also added.

Gig workers also demanded that the new government should look into providing them with better health facilities. "We want the government to extend the ESI and PF facilities to gig workers. These workers have very poor accident and health cover schemes," said Vinay Sarathy, president of the United Food Delivery Partners' Union.

*(This is the third part of a series on what people want - people from sectors whose voices are often unheard, and who are not on the top of priorities in votebank politics.)*

## Food delivery executive killed in road accident

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

A 36-year-old food delivery executive was killed after a drunk truck driver knocked his scooter down on Lower Agaram Road in Ashoknagar on Wednesday afternoon.

Nazim Shariff, a resident of Shivajinagar, was heading to Viveknagar for delivery. The truck driven by Bhojraj, heading in the same direction, knocked down his scooter, killing him on the spot. The Ashoknagar police arrested Bhojraj and subjected him to medical examination where the test confirmed high level of alcohol.

## Factory worker dies in accident

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

A 20-year-old factory worker who sustained severe head injuries in an accident on March 23 succumbed to his injuries on Wednesday.

Karthik C. was returning home on his motorcycle with his friend Sachin early on March 23 on Nagarabhavi road. The duo had gone to visit their friend at Mudalapalya. According to the police, Karthik was not wearing a helmet and lost control over the bike and hit with the footpath. They were thrown up in the air and crashed on the road.

## From Page One

### Man killed by brother-in-law for marrying without consent

But Bharath and his associates charged towards them. Nagaraju, father of Ashwath, who was riding ahead with his wife Sudha, returned on hearing the commotion and found his son dead. The police are on the hunt for the accused. A few have been detained, a police officer said. As news spread, enraged villagers attacked one of the houses of the accused and set it on fire. The police brought the situation under control. Additional police platoons have been deployed to maintain law and order in the village, a police officer said.

Nagaraju, a farmer from KG Hosahalli village, told the police that Ashwath had an affair with Sahana, who is a distant relative. However, the family had opposed the relationship following which Ashwath and Sahana eloped and got married in Dharmasthala on February 17. The family was since then furious and warned the couple of dire consequences.

### HC allows family of three to alienate their land

"Denying relief to terminally ailing citizens, especially when their property in question is the only means of holding the body and soul together by securing medical treatment, would render the constitutional guarantee to life a mere farce," the court said observed.

The court said it would be the buyers/mortgagees who will have the right to claim compensation or its enhancement from KIADB when the acquisition process is completed.

## INBRIEF

### Water adalat today

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) will hold water adalat on Thursday from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m. in various parts of the city. According to a BWSSB release, the adalat will be held at North-2-1, South 1-1, South 2-1, South West-1, South West 4, East 1-2, East 2-2, South East 2, South East 5, West-1-2, West 2-2 sub divisions from 9.30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

# Assembly polls: BJP mostly sticks to old script in Bengaluru, three seats remain a suspense

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Uday Garudachar and Arvind Limbavali

The ruling BJP, which was speculated to make major changes in its ticket distribution, has largely stuck to the old script in Bengaluru. Not only have most of the incumbent MLAs got ticket, the party has even repeated defeated candidates in seats won by the Congress and the JD(S), barring a few exceptions.

However, the party's candidates in three constituencies - Mahadevapura, Hebbal, and Govindarajnagar - remains a suspense. Multiple surveys organised by the party had revealed that Arvind Limbavali from Mahadevapura, Uday Garudachar from Chickpet, and Krishnappa from Bengaluru South face tough anti-incumbency and may end up losing. While the latter two have got ticket despite the surveys, the party has kept the fate of Mr. Limbavali, whose fortunes nosedived in the party after an alleged sex scandal in which he later got a clean chit, hanging. "We are clueless whether the high command is considering an alternative candidate," a party leader said.

Meanwhile, V. Somanna who represented Govindarajnagar in the outgoing Assembly, is now contesting from Chamarajanagar and Varuna and prefers his son Arun Somanna to get his former seat. However, the party is unlikely to fulfil his wish, sources said. Former councillor and Hindutva hardliner Umesh Shetty is in the reckoning for the seat. In Hebbal, Katta Subramanya Naidu has emerged as a frontrunner even as Y.A. Narayanaswamy is also lobbying hard for the ticket, sources said.

It was speculated that many incumbents, including S. Suresh Kumar from Rajajinagar, R. Ashok from Padmanabhanagar, and L. Ravi Subramanya from Basavanagudi will lose ticket. All of them have got ticket from their respective constituencies.

Party circles were abuzz that Tejasvini Ananthkumar, who was an aspirant for Bengaluru South Parliament ticket in 2019 and lost out to Tejaswi Surya, would be fielded from Basavanagudi even as Mr. Subramanya will be moved to Jayanagar. However, Ms. Ananthkumar failed to make the cut this time too. BJP has fielded former city councillor C.K. Ramamurthy from Jayanagar, leading to dissatisfaction in the party rank and file.

In a surprise choice, the party fielded former Police Commissioner Bhaskar Rao, who defected from AAP to BJP only recently, from Chamarajpet against B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan. There were many contenders for the seat, including Lahari Velu, and the Idgah Maidan dispute that was raked up was seen as a potent platform to polarise voters against Mr. Khan.

There had been a demand within the party to change their "ineffective" candidates against multiple-term Congress MLAs in the city. That has been a mixed bag. While A.R. Saptagiri Gowda and Padmanabha Reddy will again take on Dinesh Gundu Rao and K.J. George, the party has fielded Thammesh Gowda against Krishna Byre Gowda, instead of A. Ravi, who was defeated thrice in a row from Byatarayanapura.

"BJP leader Amit Shah had said in no uncertain terms that the party will not tolerate "adjustment politics". But, if you see the lists of Congress and BJP for the city, there is no disruption. The Congress has fielded weak candidates against Mr. Ashok, Mr. Ashwath Narayan, Mr. Vishwanath and the gesture seems reciprocated in the BJP list against Ramalinga Reddy, Mr. Rao. It's status quo," a BJP ticket aspirant, who did not make it, said.

# CET made mandatory for BSc Nursing courses from this year

## Students allowed to modify information till April 15

**Jayanth R.**
BENGALURU

Following the recommendation of the Indian Nursing Council, the State government has made the Common Entrance Test (CET) mandatory for BSc Nursing from this year.

The Karnataka Examination Authority (KEA) is planning to conduct CET for BSc Nursing courses and it will announce the notification and open the CET-2023 online application from April 14 for three days.

Ramya S., executive director of KEA, said: "The government has made CET mandatory for BSc Nursing courses entrance in the State. We will announce the notification and re-release the CET online application from April 14 for three days. We will conduct counselling, announce the seat matrix, and allot the government and management quota seats for the course from this year."

Earlier, BSc Nursing seats were allotted through KEA without any entrance test. The KEA had called an online application from eligible candidates and allotted only 20% of government quota seats on the basis of II PU science courses marks.

However, to improve the quality of nursing sciences education, the Indian Nursing Council decided to allot the B.Sc. Nursing course seats through CET from the academic year of 2023-24 and sent the proposal to all the State governments in this regard.

"The Indian Nursing Council has made mandatory of CET to the BSc Nursing courses and instructed to implement it in the State. We referred this notice to the State government and it will be implemented," said K. Ravi, director for Directorate of Medical Education.

According to sources, conducting CET for BSc Nursing courses will avoid fake and unauthorised nursing colleges and capitation mafia in the State.

According to the KEA data, there are 498 registered nursing colleges in the State offering around 35,000 nursing seats. Earlier, the KEA had allotted total of 7,332 government quota sets (20%) and the rest of the seats were filled by the nursing institutions as management quota seats. But there were allegations of private nursing institutions mushrooming in an unauthorised manner in the State. According to the State Health Ministry, there are around 850 nursing colleges in Karnataka, of which 352 colleges are running illegally. The Health Ministry had announced a committee to conduct a review in all these institutions.

"These unauthorised colleges are concentrating only on nursing course aspirants from outside the State and they will sell the seats for big money. Most of these colleges doesn't have proper infrastructure. Therefore, CET is the best method to avoid all these irregularities in nursing education," sources said.

**Timings**
**BENGALURU**

**THURSDAY, APR. 13**
RISE 06:09 SET 18:32
RISE 00:32 SET 12:05

**FRIDAY, APR. 14**
RISE 06:08 SET 18:32
RISE 01:30 SET 13:08

**SATURDAY, APR. 15**
RISE 06:07 SET 18:32
RISE 02:23 SET 14:09

| Bengaluru Weather | max | min |
|---|---|---|
| Tumakuru | 35 | 24 |
| Mysuru | 36 | 24 |
| Bengaluru | 35 | 21 |

**Bengaluru Today**
**34°C** The weather will be dry. Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be warm and humid. Night also will be pleasant.

**Bengaluru Tomorrow**
**35°C** A dry weather to continue. Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be warm and humid. Night also will be pleasant.

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THE HINDU
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# Boy reclaims amputated arm in complex replantation surgery

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Eleven year-old Charan from Kuppam in Andhra Pradesh, whose upper forearm was accidentally amputated while trying to dislodge a wooden stick from a grass-cutting machine, got a new lease of life following a complex surgery.

After the life-threatening accident, the boy was taken to a local medical college, where he received primary treatment, and was then referred to Narayana Health City for further treatment. A team of doctors led by Ravi D.R. and Sudarshan Reddy conducted the replantation surgery. Despite the fact that the boy's amputated arm had been separated from his body for more than six hours, the team of doctors responded quickly and successfully conducted the complex six-hour surgery, involving microsurgical repair of all injured structures of the hand to re-establish blood flow to the amputated part.

Dr. Ravi, who led the surgical team, said: "Replantation of limbs has a higher rate of success when conducted within the golden period of six hours, however in Charan's case it was particularly challenging due to the type of injury, a crush avulsion cut, and the young age of the boy along with the distance from his place to the hospital."

He is expected to have a complete recovery over a 9-12 month period, the doctor said.

# PSI suspended after allegations of misbehaving with complainant

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Police Sub-Inspector Manjunathswamy attached to Sudduguntepalya, who is facing charges of misbehaving with a complainant, was suspended after an FIR was filed against him on Wednesday.

The accused officer was alleged to have misbehaved with the victim and touched her inappropriately when she visited the station to record her statement related to a case. The accused also allegedly obtained her number and messaged her, amounting to indiscipline and misuse of power. The suspension was based on the accused "crossing the limit and sending a message to the victim," said a police officer, adding that following the investigation, legal action will be initiated against him.

The incident embarrassed the Police Department as this is the second incident of a police personnel misbehaving with women visitors in recent times. In the last week of March, Kodigehalli police inspector Rajanna was suspended for allegedly flirting and misbehaving with a woman who visited the station to file a complaint. The accused officer not only harassed her with personal messages, but also called her to the police station on the pretext of inquiry and gave her a cover containing dry fruits and a room key. She raised the complaint with senior officers, prompting them to order a probe before suspending him pending inquiry.

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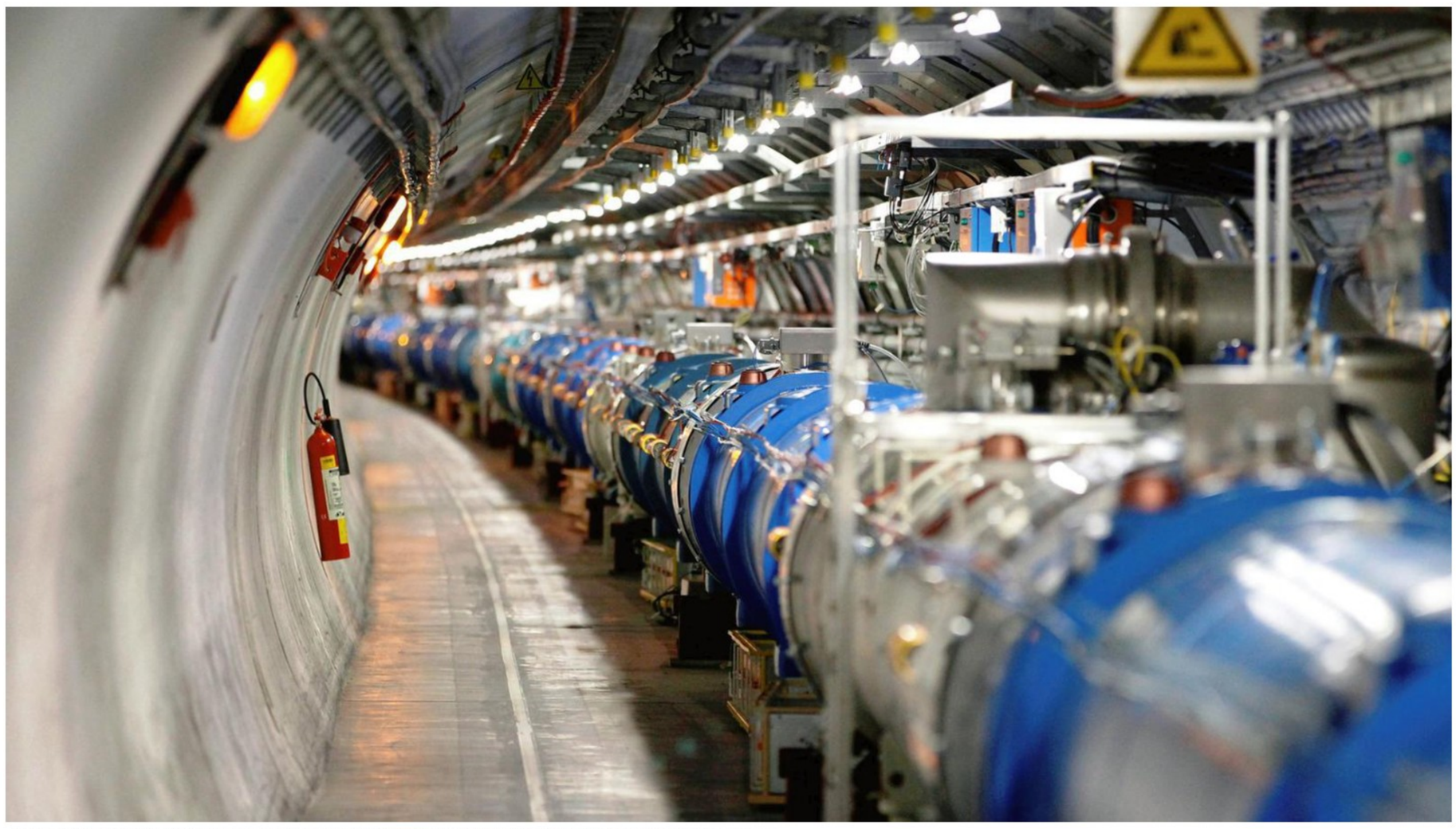


A view of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at the Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Switzerland. REUTERS

# A beginner's guide to the Large Hadron Collider, its functions and its future

It was the ATLAS and CMS detectors of the Large Hadron Collider that discovered the Higgs boson in 2012. Here is a simple explanation of how it works, what it has found, and what lies ahead of the world's largest science experiment

Vasudevan Mukunth

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC), built by the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), is on the energy frontier of physics research, conducting experiments with highly energised subatomic particles.

The LHC, true to its name, is three things. First, it is large – so large that it is the world's largest science experiment. Second, it is a collider. It accelerates two beams of particles in opposite directions and smashes them head on. Third, these particles are hadrons. Currently, engineers are warming up the LHC for its third season of operations, following upgrades that will have made the collider and its detectors more sensitive and accurate than before.

It will start collecting data again from mid-May.

**The functioning of the LHC**

A hadron is a subatomic particle made up of smaller particles. The LHC typically uses protons, which are made up of quarks and gluons. It energises the protons by accelerating them through a narrow circular pipe that is 27 km long.

Simply put, this pipe encircles two D-shaped magnetic fields, created by almost 9,600 magnets. Say there is a proton at the 3 o'clock position. It is made to move from there to the 9 o'clock position by turning on one hemisphere of magnets and turning off the other, such that the magnetic field acting on the proton causes it to move clockwise. Once it reaches the 9 o'clock position, the magnetic polarity is reversed by turning off the first hemisphere and turning on the second. This causes the proton to move in an anticlockwise direction, from 9 o'clock back to the 3 o'clock position.

This way, by switching the direction of the magnetic field more and more rapidly, protons can be accelerated through the beam pipe. There are also other components to help them along and to focus the particles and keep them from hitting the pipe's walls. Eventually, the protons move at 99.999999% of the speed of light. In the process they accrue a tremendous amount of energy according to the special theory of relativity.

**The effects of collision**

When two antiparallel beams of energised particles collide head on, the energy at the point of collision is equal to the sum of the energy carried by the two beams.

Thus far, the highest centre-of-mass collision energy the LHC has achieved is 13.6 TeV (teraelectron-volts). This is less energy than what would be produced if you clapped your hands once. The feat is that the energy is packed into a volume of space the size of a proton, which makes the energy density very high.

At the moment of collision, there is chaos. There is a lot of energy available, and parts of it coalesce into different subatomic particles under the guidance of the fundamental forces of nature.

Which particle takes shape depends on the amount and flavour of energy available and which other particles are being created or destroyed around it. Some particles are created very rarely. If, say, a particle is created with a probability of 0.00001%, there will need to be at least 10 million collisions to observe it. Some particles are quite massive and need a lot of the right kind of energy to be created (this was one of the challenges of discovering the Higgs boson). Some particles are extremely short-lived, and the detectors studying them need to record them in a similar timeframe or be alert to proxy effects.

The LHC's various components are built such that scientists can tweak all these parameters to study different particle interactions.

**The findings of the LHC**

The LHC consists of nine detectors. Located over different points on the beam pipe, they study particle interactions in different ways.

Every year, the detectors generate 30,000 TB of data worth storing, and even more overall. Physicists pore through this data with the help of computers to identify and analyse specific patterns. This is how the ATLAS and CMS detectors helped discover the Higgs boson in 2012 and confirmed their findings in 2013.

The LHC specialises in accelerating a beam of hadronic particles to certain specifications and delivering it. Scientists can choose to do different things with the beam. For example, they have used the LHC to energise and collide lead ions with each other and protons with lead ions.

Using the data from all these collisions, they have tested the predictions of the Standard Model of particle physics, the reigning theory of subatomic particles; observed exotic particles like pentaquarks and tetraquarks and checked if their properties are in line with theoretical expectations; and pieced together information about extreme natural conditions, like those that existed right after the Big Bang.

**What lies ahead for the LHC**

These successes strike a contrast with what the LHC hasn't been able to find – 'new physics', the collective name for particles or processes that can explain the nature of dark matter or why gravity is such a weak force, among other mysteries.

The LHC has tested some of the predictions of theories that try to explain what the Standard Model can't, and caught them short. This has left the physics community in a bind.

One way forward, which is already in the works, is to improve the LHC's luminosity (a measure of the machine's ability to produce particle interactions of interest) by 10x by 2027 through upgrades. Another, more controversial idea is to build a bigger version of the LHC, based on the hypothesis that such a machine will be able to find 'new physics' at even higher energies.

While both CERN and China have unveiled initial plans of bigger machines, physicists are divided on whether the billions of dollars they will cost can be used to build less-expensive experiments, including other colliders, with guaranteed instead of speculative results.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

## A quiz about graphene, a deceptively simple form of carbon with unusual properties

Vasudevan Mukunth

**QUESTION 1**

Graphene, diamonds, and fullerenes are all _____ of carbon. Fill in the blank with a term derived from the Greek word for 'variability'.

**QUESTION 2**

Graphene is a two-dimensional sheet of carbon atoms bonded in a hexagonal pattern. What is the material called when these sheets are stacked over each other in three dimensions?

**QUESTION 3**

For his work on graphene, Andre Geim received part of the 2010 physics Nobel Prize. In 2000, he received an __ _____ Prize for levitating a frog using its own magnetic field. He remains the only individual to have won both prizes. Name the second prize.

**QUESTION 4**

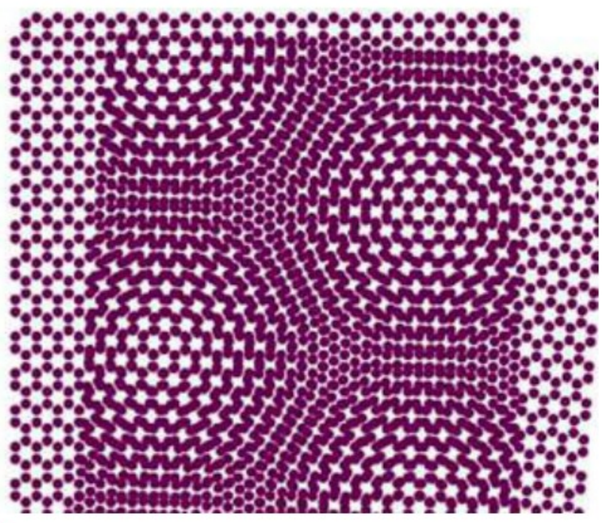
In 2004, Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov used micromechanical cleavage to isolate graphene from graphite. Aside from graphite, what material does this technique require to work?

**QUESTION 5**

On April 12, U. K. researchers reported that graphene displays giant magnetoresistance (GMR) at room temperature, which is astonishing. What is the main application of GMR? (Hint: *The Hindu* has written about it.)

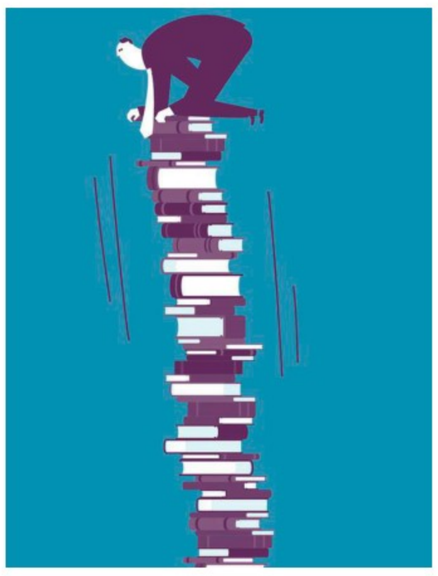
**QUESTION 6**

Graphene is to carbon as silicene is to silicon, germanene is to germanium, and stanene is to _____. Fill in the blank.



**Visual question:**
Place one graphene sheet on another and twist by a small angle, and the material becomes superconducting. The twist creates this visual pattern named for the French word for 'watered fabric'. What's the name? WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

**Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:** 1. This artificial satellite was launched from this airport triggering the space race in 1958. **Ans: Sputnik 1, Baikonur Cosmodrome**
2. The father of practical astronautics. **Ans: Sergei Korolev**
3. The popular expression in the Eastern Bloc that was used to refer to the beginning of the Space Age. **Ans: Poyekhali!**
4. Gagarin circled the Earth aboard the Vostok 1 spacecraft for this long. **Ans: 1 hour and 48 minutes**
5. In 1981, this space shuttle was launched for its first orbital flight. **Ans: STS-1 Columbia**
6. The World Space Party celebrated in 2001 is also known by this name. **Ans: Yuri's Night**
7. In a 2010 Space Foundation survey, Gagarin ranked as the sixth-most-popular space hero and tied with this fictional character. **Ans: James T. Kirk**
Visual: How is this fighter jet related to Yuri Gagarin. **Ans: This is a MiG-15UTI similar to the one involved in the crash that killed Gagarin**
**Early Birds:** K. N. Viswanathan| Indra Sharma| M. Suresh Kumar| Anna Krishna



FROM THE ARCHIVES

## *Know your English*

K. Subrahmanian

"Mr. Ch. L. Narasimhan, Retired Headmaster, Gannavaram, wants to know the difference between 'consult with' and 'consult'."

"They mean the same.

*I consulted my friend.*

*I consulted with my friend.*

'Consult with' was used first in America. These days it is used by British writers also. But still there are some in Britain who denounce 'consult with' as an Americanism. The extra word 'with' doesn't add to the meaning. Hence use the non-controversial 'consult'."

"Ms. Sushma M. Mukherjee, X class, Nirmala High School, Machilipatnam, wants to know the difference between 'sympathy' and 'empathy'."

"'Empathy' is used in psychology to mean the power of projecting one's personality into (and so fully comprehending) the object of contemplation. It is the ability of a person to project himself/herself into another being and share the feelings and emotions. When you empathise, you identify yourself totally with another.

*They are such great friends that they empathise with each other.*

In empathy, there is total identification with another. 'Sympathy' means (capacity for) sharing the feelings of others, feeling pity and tenderness.

*I don't have any sympathy for him.*

*He has no sympathy for the working class people.*

In sympathy, there is fellow feeling, in empathy there is identification with another. The word 'empathy' is only about hundred years old."

"Mr. M. Narayana, Kothakota, wants to know the pronunciation of 'campaign'."

" 'Cam' rhymes with 'dam'; 'paign' is pronounced like the word 'pain'. The 'g' in the word is silent. The stress is on the second syllable."

"Mr. A. K. Azad, Meerut, wants to know the meaning of the expression 'draconian laws'."

"Draco was the first person to codify laws in Athens in 621 B.C. He suggested capital punishment even for minor crimes. Hence 'draconian' means 'rigorous, severe, harsh, cruel'.

*He took draconian measures to put down violence."*

Mr. Palani C. Shanmugam, E. K. Valaru, Erode, wants to know the meaning of 'nail-biting finish'."

" 'Nail-biting' is used figuratively to mean 'characteristic of or causing emotional tension or anxiety.'

*We had another nail-biting session with him.*

*Pakistan won in a nail-biting finish.*

We tend to bite our nails when we are tense or anxious."

*Published in The Hindu on August 11, 1987*

## Word of the day

**Golem:**
a mechanism that can move automatically; according to Jewish folklore, an artificially created human being that is given life by supernatural means

Synonyms: robot, automaton

Usage: *My co-worker moves about like a golem.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/golempro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈgəʊ.ləm/, /ˈgɒl.əm/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

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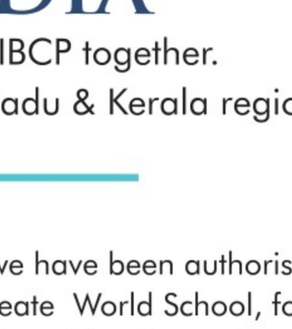

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## INBRIEF

### Filing of nomination papers begins today

With the issue of gazette notification for the 16th Karnataka Assembly elections on Thursday, candidates can start filing nominations for the May 10 Assembly polls.

According to the Election Commission's (EC) schedule of events, the last date for filing of nominations is April 20. The papers will be scrutinised on April 21, and the last date for withdrawal of candidatures is April 24, a release from the EC in Bengaluru said. The State has 5.24 crore voters and 58,282 polling stations in the 224 constituencies.

A release from the EC said candidates can file nomination papers in the office of the jurisdictional Returning Officer from 11 a.m. till 3 p.m. on working days.

A candidate is permitted to take only four others with him/her while filing nomination papers . Moreover, only three vehicles are permitted to enter within 100 metres of the office of the jurisdictional Returning Officer.

### Pressure to field Suresh against Ashok: Shivakumar

KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar *(in picture)* on Wednesday said in Bengaluru that pressure was mounting on him and the party that Bangalore Rural MP D.K. Suresh be fielded against Revenue Minister R. Ashok in the Padmanabhanagar Assembly segment.

The BJP has fielded Mr. Ashok against Mr. Shivakumar in the Kanakapura constituency. Mr. Ashok would also contest from his Padmanabhanagar seat. However, the party has already given the Padmanabhanagar ticket to V. Raghunath Naidu.

"Politics isn't football. It's a game of chess that both of us are playing," Mr. Shivakumar said on the BJP's decision to field Mr. Ashok against him.

The Congress has not named its candidate against Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai in Shiggaon. Mr Shivakumar said former Minister Vinay Kulkarni is "a serious, probable" candidate for Shiggaon. The party has already named Mr. Kulkarni as the Dharwad candidate. "We will discuss with our leaders," the KPCC chief said.

# BJP faces heat from disappointed ticket aspirants; Savadi, Gulihatti to quit party

Angara announces retirement from politics, while Raghupati Bhat says he is sad about being ignored by the party

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The ruling BJP is facing the heat of rebellion and heartburn by the disappointed ticket aspirants close on the heels of the party releasing its first list of candidates comprising 189 names. The party has made way for 52 fresh faces in the first list and has replaced 11 incumbent MLAs.

Laxman Savadi, BJP MLA, speaking to journalists at his home at Athani in Belagavi district on Wednesday, and (right) Gulihatti Shekar.

The party is facing a tough situation in Athani of Belagavi district where MLC and former Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi announced his decision to quit the BJP after he was denied the ticket.

**Next move soon**

Mr. Savadi, who is keen to contest the Assembly polls, said he would announce his next political move soon after consulting his supporters.

Expressing disappointment over not getting the ticket, Mr. Savadi trained his guns on Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who is his long-time associate, by saying that Mr. Bommai could have informed him about missing out on the ticket earlier to avoid the ignominy.

Taking a dig at the Chief Minister, he sarcastically remarked that Mr. Bommai would not only get the second term as Chief Minister, but may also succeed Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister some time later.

Another incumbent MLA from Belagavi district, Anil Benake, too expressed his anguish over missing out on the party ticket, while his supporters staged a dharna in front of the residence of local MP to express displeasure.

Similarly, the former Minister and incumbent MLA Gulihatti Shekar, who has been denied the ticket, made it clear that he would contest as an Independent from Hosadurga. Maintaining that he was one of those who helped in bringing the BJP to power for the first time in Karnataka, he alleged that the party had now ignored him.

Minister and six-time MLA S. Angara, who was denied the ticket, announced retirement from politics itself while expressing disappointment over the party not giving him the ticket.

Pointing out that he never faced any controversies or allegations in his political career, he wondered if being honest proved costly for him.

Another incumbent MLA Raghupathi Bhat broke down in front of cameras while saying that he felt sad that the party had ignored him and instead chosen a candidate who had been groomed by him.

**One more MLC resigns**

Meanwhile, the former Minister and MLC R. Shankar, who was an aspirant for the party ticket from Ranebennur, tendered his resignation to the MLC post in a bid to contest as an Independent as the party denied him the ticket. Mr. Shankar accused the BJP of ignoring him after utilising his services to form its government.

# Rowdy-sheeter, IMA scam accused among BJP candidates

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU/KALABURAGI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was accused of hobnobbing with rowdy-sheeters in the run-up to the Assembly elections. However, 'Silent' Sunil and 'Fighter' Ravi, who brought much criticism the party's way, have not got the ticket, prompting supporters of Mr. Sunil to protest in front of the BJP office in Bengaluru. However, another rowdy-sheeter Manikantha Rathod has been given the ticket to contest against Congress leader Priyank Kharge in Chittapur constituency.

**Rowdy-sheeter Manikantha Rathod to contest against Priyank Kharge in Chittapur; scam accused L.C. Nagaraj to contest from Madhugiri**

Mr. Rathod is facing over 30 criminal cases reported in Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Bagalkot, Vijayapura, and Bidar districts, involving serious crimes such as attempt to murder, illegal transportation of Anna Bhagya rice, narcotics smuggling, being in illegal possession of firearms, and criminal intimidation.

He was arrested on November 13 last year for threatening Mr. Kharge with murder, and later, released on bail. In a media conference then, he had openly expressed his readiness to shoot down Mr. Kharge.

Taking into account the criminal cases being booked against Mr. Rathod, Police Commissioner Y.S. Ravikumar issued an order banishing him from Kalaburagi for a year in September last. However, Mr. Rathod has secured a stay order against this from court.

**IMA scan accused**

Meanwhile, former KAS officer L.C. Nagaraj, accused in the ₹4,000-crore IMA Ponzi scheme scam, has made it to the BJP list from Madhugiri against incumbent MLA M.V. Veerabhadraiah of the JD(S) and Congress leader K. Rajanna. Mr. Nagaraj was one of the first officers to be arrested in the scam and has been chargesheeted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

It can be recalled that BJP had led the charge against Congress and JD(S) over the scam. R. Roshan Baig, one of the other accused in the case resigned as an MLA in 2019 along with 16 others, as part of 'Operation Lotus' that brought down the JD(S)-Congress coalition government, and was reportedly ready to defect to the BJP. However, the BJP high command reportedly blocked his entry into the party over allegations of corruption.

A senior BJP functionary said all parties were forced to take certain decisions solely based on the criteria of winnability. "For instance, the party had fought against Mr. Baig tooth and nail and blocked his entry. But we had also been fighting against Munirathna hard. But he is now our Minister," the functionary said.

### Kagodu's daughter joins BJP

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Raja Nandini, daughter of veteran Congress leader Kagodu Thimmappa, quit the party and joined the BJP on Wednesday.

Admitting her into the party, BJP parliamentary board member B.S. Yediyurappa said Dr. Raja Nandini, a doctor by profession, was in the forefront of social activities in Shivamogga.

The party would provide her a suitable position, he said.

### *Urging them to vote*

**Reaching out:** A voter awareness campaign, under SVEEP, was conducted at Embassy Tech Village at Mahadevapura in Bengaluru on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

# Six more MLAs miss the ticket as BJP announces second list of 23 names

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

The BJP on Wednesday released the second list of candidates comprising 23 names, a day after releasing the first list of 189 candidates.

The highlight of the second list is that the party has denied the ticket to six more MLAs, including Madal Virupakshappa, who is facing a corruption probe by the Lokayukta and is currently in custody. With this, the total number of incumbent MLAs who have been denied the ticket has touched 17.

**Nehru Olekar, Madal Virupakshappa, M.P. Kumaraswamy, S.A. Ravindranath are among them**

In Haveri (SC reserved), the BJP has denied the ticket to MLA Nehru Olekar, who had been sentenced in a corruption case, though he had obtained a stay from the higher court. In his place, the party has fielded Gavisiddappa Dhyamannavar. The party has also denied the ticket to MLA for Mudigere (reserved) constituency M.P. Kumaraswamy. It has fielded Deepak Doddaiah from there. In Davangere North, MLA and former Minister S.A. Ravindranath has missed the ticket, perhaps on account of age. In his place, Lokikere Nagaraj has been accommodated. Similarly, MLA Linganna has been denied the ticket in Mayakonda (SC reserved) constituency.

The party has continued its trend of rehauling in the coastal region as it has denied the ticket to MLA for Byndoor Sukumar Shetty and fielded Gururaj Gantiholi from there.

Nagaraj Chabbi, a disappointed ticket aspirant from the Congress who joined the BJP just a few days ago, has been given the ticket to contest from Kalghatagi. Family member of the former MLA Sampangi, Ashwini, has been accommodated in KGF (SC) constituency.

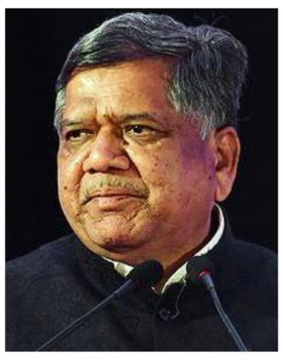
# Shettar expresses optimism after meeting Nadda in Delhi

**The Hindu Bureau**
HUBBALLI

The former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar, who had announced his plan to contest the Assembly polls after the BJP leadership had nudged him to retire from electoral politics, met party president J.P. Nadda in New Delhi on Wednesday and expressed optimism about the party reconsidering its decision.

After Mr. Shettar said he was hurt by the way the party had treated a former Chief Minister, Mr. Nadda called him to New Delhi. Mr. Shettar was with Mr. Nadda for nearly half an hour.

Speaking to *The Hindu* over the telephone, Mr. Shettar said Mr. Nadda gave him a patient hearing. "I presented my viewpoint and my concerns before him and he said he would get back to me after talking to other senior members of the party," the former Chief Minister said.



Jagadish Shettar

Mr. Shettar said he was positive of the party high command reconsidering its decision and allowing him to contest again from Hubballi-Dharwad Central constituency, which he had won six times.

**99% confirmed: BSY**

Meanwhile, replying to a query during a press conference in Bengaluru on Wednesday, the former Chief Minister and member of the party parliamentary board B.S. Yediyurappa said it was 99% confirmed that Mr. Shettar would get the ticket.

Speaking to presspersons in Hubballi before leaving for New Delhi, Mr. Shettar expressed pain over the treatment meted out to him. Even in case of political retirement, it should be done with some respect, he said.

# BJP desists from effecting comprehensive overhaul in its first list of candidates

**B.S. Satish Kumar**
BENGALURU

Though several senior BJP leaders in Karnataka, especially those facing controversies, were anxious about the possibility of getting an axe from the high command, the first list of candidates released by the party for the Assembly elections shows that the party has desisted from any comprehensive rehaul.

Several senior leaders in Karnataka were apprehensive after the BJP managed to sweep the Gujarat Assembly polls by replacing 38 incumbent MLAs. The fact that the Central leaders frequently visited the State to monitor poll preparations had further added to the expectation of a rehaul. But they are now relieved as the first list comprising 189 names released on Tuesday shows that the party has replaced only 11 incumbent MLAs so far, including veteran leader B.S. Yediyurappa and Halady Srinivas Shetty, who had already announced retirement from electoral politics.

**Though there are 52 new faces in the list, most of them have replaced those who lost in the previous Assembly elections and not incumbent MLAs**

Though there are 52 new faces in the first list, most of these new faces have replaced those who lost in the previous Assembly elections and not incumbent MLAs.

In fact, enthused by the possibility of emulating the Gujarat experiment in Karnataka, several party workers had been actively venting their anger against several MLAs whom they thought were not responsive to their problems. But their expectations have been dashed.

**Going soft on some**

The BJP has made significant changes only in the coastal region where it has a strong organisational presence.

Interestingly, while it dealt sternly with leaders such as S. Angara who are loyal to the party, it appears to have adopted a soft stand towards influential candidates which is evident with the party giving the ticket to two candidates from the Katti family, fielding the son of Minister B.S. Anand Singh, and supporting the powerful Jarkiholis in Belagavi district.

**Tight political situation**

The critics of the BJP interpret this as the result of a tight political situation that has not given scope for much political play for the party leaders. However, leaders who are in the know about developments in the BJP, said that the central leadership could not effect a complete rehaul this time as it also had to take into account the 2024 Parliamentary polls.

"We cannot afford to effect drastic changes in the areas where our organisation is not strong. Our main concern is to identify winnable candidates as we have to win the Assembly elections," a BJP leader said. However, he maintained that the party has been trying to balance between winning potential as well as its image.

A significant feature of the list is that the party has fielded prominent leaders R. Ashok and V. Somanna to take on Congress leaders D.K. Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah, respectively. Also, the party has given chance to a large number of young candidates, especially those below the age of 40.

## INBRIEF

### HC gives Kerala one week to translocate wild elephant

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Wednesday ordered the State government to identify a suitable site, instead of Parambikulam, for the translocation of wild elephant Arikompan from Idukki, within a week. The Bench said that if no alternative site was identified, the court's earlier order for translocating the elephant to Parambikulam order shall stand.

### Two killed, six injured in LPG cylinder blast in Khammam

Two persons were killed in a LPG cylinder blast at the venue of the BRS' 'Athmeeya Sammelanam' in Khammam district of Telangana on Wednesday. Six others, who sustained injuries, are undergoing treatment. A police constable and a few BRS cadre were among those seriously injure. The condition of one of them is stated to be critical. The incident occurred when sparks from firecrackers burst by a BRS member to welcome party leaders landed on a hut.

### Telangana HC issues notices to 11 policemen in Disha case

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday issued notices to 11 police personnel, including senior IPS officer V.C. Sajjanar, in a writ petition filed by family members of Disha case accused who died in an alleged exchange of fire with the police. A Bench of Chief Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice N. Tukaramji issued notices to them. The family members of the accused in the case wanted the court to direct the government to register a murder case against police personnel and order for an investigation by CBI into the alleged "extra-judicial killings".

# Gold smuggling case: HC turns down plea to probe CM's role

Kerala HC says there are no materials to assume that investigation is not conducted properly; the dictum 'Be you ever so high, the law is above you' applies to all, irrespective of status or position

**The Hindu Bureau**
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Wednesday dismissed a petition seeking a directive to the Customs and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to investigate further the alleged role of high-ranking political functionaries, including Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and former Speaker P. Sreeramakrishnan, in the diplomatic gold smuggling case.

Dismissing the petition filed by Aji Krishnan, founder secretary of NGO Highrange Rural Development Society, Justice Bechu Kurian Thomas observed that the Customs and the ED have conducted or are conducting an investigation in the case. There are no materials to assume that the probe is not being conducted properly. Other than the assumptions that the investigation is not being conducted properly, the petitioner has not produced any material before the court to arrive at a conclusion that the probe would proceed contrary to the law.

Pinarayi Vijayan

The court said there were no reasons to assume that if the involvement of any persons is revealed during the investigation, they would not be proceeded against. "For, the dictum 'Be you ever so high, the law is above you' applies with equal vigour to all, irrespective of status or position," it said.

The court noted that a Division Bench had already dismissed two writ petitions seeking a fair probe into the allegations of gold smuggling and also to set in motion criminal law proceedings against the Chief Minister in the case.

# Supreme Court judge recuses from hearing Belagavi dispute case

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge, Justice Aravind Kumar, on Wednesday recused from hearing an original suit filed by the State of Maharashtra concerning the boundary dispute with neighbouring Karnataka over certain districts, including Belagavi.

The Bench led by Justice S.K. Kaul referred the case back to the Chief Justice of India for listing it before another Bench.

Justice Kumar is the fourth Supreme Court judge to withdraw from the case after Justice B.V. Nagarathna.

Earlier, Justices Abdul S. Nazeer and M. Shantanagoudar had recused from the case.

**Challenged**

Maharashtra had challenged the provisions of the States Reorganisation Act of 1956. Noting that States were demarcated on linguistic lines, Maharashtra had contended that areas in the borders of Karnataka had several Marathi-speaking villages and they should be incorporated with it.

Karnataka had invoked Article 3 of the Constitution to argue that the Parliament alone had the authority to decide State boundaries.

"The legislative exercise of powers under Article 3 of the Constitution does not vest any right in a State government. When such an exercise is carried out, no consent or concurrence of a State is taken in terms of proviso to Article 3, only views of the State are taken," Karnataka had contended.

It had countered Maharashtra's linguistic claim over the areas by arguing that the 1956 Act had also taken into consideration financial, economic and administrative considerations while demarcating the boundaries.

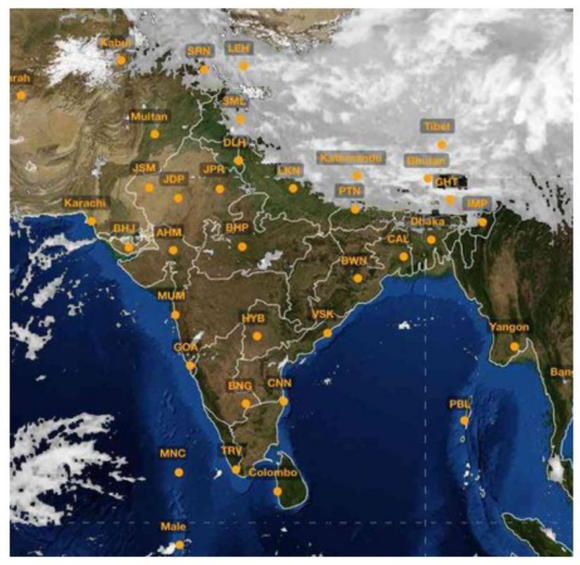
Karnataka had argued that the suit was not tenable.

However, Maharashtra had responded that its suit was maintainable under the apex court's original and exclusive jurisdiction to resolve any dispute between two or more States as provided in Article 131 of the Constitution.

Previously, the Union government had also questioned the maintainability of the suit.

## WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday




TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

**Forecast for Thursday:** Hailstorm with thunderstorm/lightning likely at isolated places over Gujarat, central Maharashtra, Vidarbha and Marathwada. Heat wave conditions likely in isolated pockets over coastal areas of Gangetic West Bengal and Odisha

| CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN | CITY | RAIN | MAX | MIN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agartala | — | 38.3 | 21.8 | Kozhikode | — | 37.0 | 27.8 |
| Ahmedabad | — | 39.0 | 26.2 | Kurnool | — | 42.5 | 24.8 |
| Aizawl | — | 27.0 | 15.1 | Lucknow | — | 38.4 | 21.4 |
| Allahabad | — | 41.2 | 20.7 | Madurai | — | 37.8 | 24.8 |
| Bengaluru | — | 35.6 | 21.4 | Mangaluru | — | 34.8 | 25.6 |
| Bhopal | — | — | 22.2 | Mumbai | — | 36.5 | 25.8 |
| Bhubaneswar | — | 39.8 | 24.6 | Mysuru | — | 36.2 | 24.0 |
| Chandigarh | — | 36.0 | 19.8 | New Delhi | — | 36.7 | 22.1 |
| Chennai | — | 36.6 | 24.2 | Patna | — | 40.2 | 20.6 |
| Coimbatore | — | 37.4 | 24.0 | Port Blair | — | 34.0 | 25.2 |
| Dehradun | — | 35.0 | 16.5 | Puducherry | — | 35.2 | 22.8 |
| Gangtok | 0.2 | 21.6 | 13.6 | Pune | — | 38.7 | 23.2 |
| Goa | — | 34.0 | 25.4 | Raipur | — | 40.8 | 25.8 |
| Guwahati | — | 35.8 | 17.7 | Ranchi | — | 36.2 | 20.6 |
| Hubballi | — | 39.0 | 22.0 | Shillong | — | 26.2 | 14.4 |
| Hyderabad | — | 38.2 | 23.9 | Shimla | — | 22.9 | 12.8 |
| Imphal | — | 32.3 | 17.7 | Srinagar | — | 25.8 | 7.4 |
| Jaipur | — | 37.4 | 23.8 | Thiruvananthapuram | — | 35.0 | 25.2 |
| Kochi | — | 33.4 | 27.6 | Tiruchi | — | 38.1 | 24.6 |
| Kohima | — | 26.6 | 13.0 | Vijayawada | — | 39.7 | 24.9 |
| Kolkata | — | 38.5 | 27.5 | Visakhapatnam | — | 34.2 | 27.6 |

*(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)*

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

| CITIES | $SO_2$ | $NO_2$ | CO | PM2.5 | PM10 | CODE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahmedabad | .11 | ..17 | .24 | ...119 | ...124 | |
| Bengaluru | ...7 | ..80 | .45 | .....39 | ....89 | |
| Chennai | ...2 | 108 | .93 | .....95 | ....84 | |
| Delhi | .16 | ..67 | .32 | ...330 | ...308 | |
| Hyderabad | ...7 | ..32 | .46 | ...124 | ...137 | |
| Kolkata | .28 | ..25 | .27 | ...140 | ...151 | |
| Lucknow | .39 | 109 | .35 | ...209 | ...142 | |
| Mumbai | .13 | ..15 | .48 | ...169 | ...144 | |
| Pune | 106 | 166 | 111 | ...130 | ....98 | |
| Visakhapatnam | .15 | ..47 | .71 | ...100 | ...153 | |

**Yesterday**

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Byrnihat, Assam recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 383 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Damoh, Madhya Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 37

**Air Quality Code:** Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

**$SO_2$:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

**$NO_2$:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

**CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

**PM2.5 & PM10:** Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

# Datta holds talks with Deve Gowda

**The Hindu Bureau**
BENGALURU

Amid speculation over his return to Janata Dal (S), former MLA for Kadur Y.S.V. Datta, who was denied Congress ticket, on Wednesday met Janata Dal (S) supremo and former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda here to discuss the possibility of contesting the Assembly polls on the JD (S) ticket.

C.M. Dhananjaya has already been named as the JD(S) candidate from Kadur. Sources confirmed the meeting between the two leaders, but refused to divulge the outcome. Mr. Datta, a one time MLC and MLA, had left JD(S) last year to join the Congress over differences with former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy.

Though he had announced that he would contest as an Independent, speculation was rife that he could re-join the JD (S) with former Minister H.D. Revanna intervening in the matter.

The opinion of Bhoje Gowda, MLC, could also matter in Mr. Datta's future in the JD(S), the sources said. Party sources said that Mr. Revanna, who has been seeking ticket to his wife Bhavani from Hassan constituency, was keen on Mr. Datta's return to ensure support to his son Prajwal Revanna, MP for Hassan.

Y.S.V. Datta

Kadur constituency in Chikkamagaluru district falls under Hassan Lok Sabha constituency, and Mr. Datta's support could help Mr. Prajwal in the general elections in 2024, the sources pointed out.

The re-entry of Mr. Datta could be a ground to untie the knot for the Hassan ticket distribution imbroglio, the sources added.

**Second list on April 15**

Meanwhile, the JD (S), which had been waiting for the BJP and Congress to announce their lists of candidates, could announce its second list of around 50 candidates on April 15, the sources indicated. "Many disappointed aspirants from BJP and Congress have been in touch with Mr. Kumaraswamy, and a decision would be taken after the candidates confirm their move," sources said.

# 'Master developer for PM Mitra parks to be selected in 3 months'

**A.M. Jigeesh**
NEW DELHI

Almost a month after the Centre announced its decision to set up seven mega textile parks under the PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) scheme, Union Textiles Secretary Rachna Shah said the institutional mechanism to begin the works in two mega parks in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka will be ready in three months. Ms. Shah said the Centre has asked the States to expedite the process to form a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) and to select a master developer to implement the scheme.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Ms. Shah said the SPV, which will be formed between the States and the Centre for each of the parks, will become the agency that will oversee the implementation of the park. "We have signed MoUs (Memorandum of Understanding) with Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Other MoUs will be signed in the due course. The SPV, in turn, would be selecting a master developer. These are mega parks of at least 1,000 acres. Fifty per cent of the parks will be used for developing core infrastructure. There will be common facilities and special facilities such as testing, skills training and logistical arrangements. Commercial areas will be allowed in 10%. The master developer will conceptualise and prepare the plan for development of the park comprising these elements," Ms. Shah said.

The Textiles Secretary said the parks have already elicited interest from investors. "It is in early stages. We will reach out to big and small investors in India and abroad. In Karnataka, investment interest worth about ₹1,900 crore has been expressed. We expect that each park will generate one lakh jobs," she added.

# Train arson case: Suspect's links to extremist groups under investigation

**The Hindu Bureau**
KOZHIKODE/KANNUR

The special police team investigating the Kozhikode train arson case is currently looking into whether the prime suspect, Shahrukh Saifi, was recruited by a covert organisation linked to any outlawed extremist group to orchestrate the attack on the Alappuzha-Kannur Executive Express on April 2. According to police sources, Saifi was reportedly a self-radicalised individual, who may have been strategically assigned to target the train.

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| 2. | SE/P&A/TTPS | TTPS 3181-S | 1 |

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**1)E-Tender Notice No.ED-SZ-BAM-01/2023-24:** Bids are invited under single stage two-envelop system from the reputed epc/ turnkey contractors for construction of 1 no of 132kV feeder bay each at 132/33 kV Grid S/S, Dabugaon and Grid S/S, Umerkote with hotline stringing from Dabugoan to Umerkote under EHT O&M Division, Jayanagar at an estimated cost of Rs.9,29,08,003/- under Southern Zone, Berhampur.

Complete set of bidding documents are available on:**www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL** portal and OPTCL's official website: **www.optcl.co.in.** FIPR-03/2023-24

CAD-143 OIPR-04011/11/0009/2324

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, Rekha Anil Gandhi W/o Praful A Mehta are living together as married couple since 07.07.2019 that Rekha Anil Gandhi (Maiden name of wife) would be henceforth be known and my true, correct and continue my name as **Rekha Praful Mehta (New Name after marriage)** only in all her future records, deeds, writings, proceedings, transactions private as well as upon all occasions whatsoever vide affidavit sworn before Advocate and Notary L. Shankarnarayana on1.04.2023

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**SPECIAL PROJECTS DEPARTMENT**

S.P.D.C.No B1/0424/2023 **e - TENDER NOTICE**
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Tender document will be available in website: **https://tntenders.gov.in**
The bidders must possess Digital Signature Certificate for submission of bids through online in the above website.
Pre-bid meeting date and time : 24.04.2023 at 3.00 p.m.
Tender last date and time of submission : 10.05.2023 upto 3.00 p.m.
Tender opening date and time : 11.05.2023 at 3.00 p.m
DIPR / 2123 / Tender / 2023
சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்
**Superintending Engineer (Special Projects)**

**CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CONSUMER PROTECTION DEPARTMENT**
Office of the Commissioner of Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection
Ezhilagam IV floor, Chepauk, Chennai-600005
Phone:044-28592255, 28583222, 28583422

**Tender Reference No.I2/32100/2022**

**Name of the tender:** Identification of New System Integrator for the Implementation of End to End Computerisation of Public Distribution System in Phase II.

**The last date and time for the tender submission has been extended upto 04.00 PM on 21.04.2023. The tender will be opened on 21.04.2023 at 05.00 PM.**

For further details visit **https://tntenders.gov.in**

DIPR/2136/Tender/2023
"சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்"
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SPMF-Therapy for Osteoarthritis and DDD is a 21-day process that requires only one hour of your time per day. You will be exposed to precisely programmed magnetic fields that target the affected joints. You will not feel any pain or discomfort during or after the treatment. You will be able to resume your normal activities immediately.

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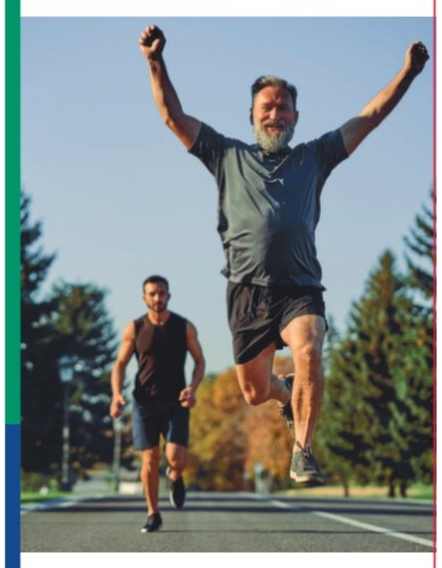

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## Ready, or not

### Health systems must gear up to face the fresh rise in COVID-19 cases

The better part of management is preparedness. Unless a certain clairvoyance, inspired by evidence, is possible and systems are ready, post facto management could be a damp squib. The rising numbers of COVID-19 cases in the country indicate the need to gear up again. On April 12, a total of 7,830 new cases were reported in a 24-hour period, according to the Union Health Ministry's data, possibly the highest in over 200 days. There are over 40,000 active cases in the country as on date. A lineage of the Omicron virus called XBB.1.16 is said to be behind the current rapid proliferation of cases in the country. Fatalities are also slowly increasing, being reported from States where there had been no deaths reported for months. It might be reassuring that initial studies of the behaviour of XBB.1.16 show milder infections not requiring hospitalisation, indicating that it is not a very virulent strain. However, health systems can scarcely afford to be under prepared, especially considering the recent traumatic experience of a raging pandemic taking a huge toll.

In any long-winded battle in the realm of public health, a sense of fatigue is inevitable, particularly during a pandemic when the demand on health human resources and infrastructure is relentless. Every opportunity to lay down the burden will be seized, naturally, and low infection levels over time can lead to complacence. The rising number of COVID-19 cases in India is that call to rouse health systems across the country and have them in a state of readiness to meet the challenge. The difference though, between March 2023 and March 2020, is that the world is no longer COVID-naive. The experience has given an indication of how to be prepared, even if the World Health Organization has come round to treating COVID-19 similar to seasonal influenza. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at the meeting of the COVID-19 taskforce two weeks ago, rightly advised States to focus on the stratagem that worked earlier – 'test-track-treat-vaccinate' and adhere to COVID-appropriate behaviour. He also called for enhancing lab surveillance, testing all severe acute respiratory illness cases, and for drills to be conducted regularly in hospitals, nationwide. Several States have brought in compulsory masking at various levels, and conducted drills. But, it is also clear from prior experience that a lot depends on compliance at the personal level – hand washing hygiene, masking, and reaching the hospital early particularly in the case of senior citizens and persons with co-morbidities. As governments prepare themselves, strengthening health systems, individuals should also be prudent to take adequate precautions.

## Skill over chance

### Authorities must create an environment for healthy online games

Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi's assent, on April 7, to the Bill prohibiting online gambling and regulating online games in the State, has brought closure to a controversial issue. Almost all parties, including the AIADMK and the BJP, have backed the legislation, now called the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Online Gambling and Regulation of Online Games Act. The passage of the Bill has seen ups and downs. About a month ago, the Governor returned the Bill, on the grounds that the State Assembly had "no legislative competence" to enact such a law. In late March, the House re-adopted and sent the Bill back to him. In the meantime, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur had, referring to the presence of "betting and gambling" in the State List (Entry 34), clarified in Parliament that online gambling too came under the jurisdiction of States. The news that the piece of legislation had received the assent of the Governor came out on April 10 – the day the House had adopted a resolution urging the President and the Union government to ensure time-bound gubernatorial assent to Bills passed.

The Governor's approach to the Bill – of late assent – is in contrast to when he approved an identical ordinance in October last. His meeting with e-gaming industry representatives, even as the Bill was under his consideration, came in for criticism. Adding to the intrigue was the Raj Bhavan's silence over four months when the Bill was with the Governor. In fact, on the day that the Raj Bhavan returned the Bill to the Assembly (March 8), there was no official word from the Governor's side in support of his stand. Mr. Ravi could have deflected criticism had he made his stand open, as he had done to a Bill that he had returned in February 2022, seeking exemption for students of the State from the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for medicine (this Bill is awaiting presidential assent). Further, with the Centre having notified the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, there should be no confusion as far as enforcing the law is concerned – which has to be done in conjunction with the IT Act, 2000. Addiction to online gaming has resulted in financial distress in many a family and also caused serious health issues. Even while seeking to implement the law banning online gambling and online games of chance (rummy and poker), the proposed Tamil Nadu Online Gaming Authority should ensure a balance: no restrictions on online games permitted under the Act as well as monitoring of online game providers. In an ever-evolving digital world, it would be in the interests of all to create an environment for healthy online games.

# Corporate power and Indian inflation

A new explanation has been proposed for the recent trajectory of inflation in India, with implications for its control. The former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Viral Acharya, is reported to have observed (on an Indian news and opinion website on March 30) that, unlike in the West where it abated with COVID-19, core inflation remains elevated in India. This he ascribes to the pricing power of five big corporates ('Big 5'). The narrative has received wide coverage in the financial press. For readers not acquainted with the jargon of central bankers, 'core' inflation is all-commodity inflation stripped of the inflation of food and fuel prices.

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### The factor of food price inflation

We offer five comments on the claim that corporate pricing power is driving inflation in India currently. First, a divergence between inflation rates in India and the rest of the world is not new. After the global financial crisis of 2008, Indian inflation surged, reaching levels higher than in its epicentre, namely the economies of the United States and the United Kingdom. This was due to a surge in food price inflation in India, driven by negative agricultural shocks and high procurement price hikes. As food-price inflation tends to feed into core inflation, it would be hasty to conclude that Indian inflation is higher than in the West today due to corporate pricing power.

Note that for the month of February the wholesale price (WP) based food-price inflation was 2.8% while that for manufactured products, the largest commodity group in the index, was lower at 2% (Ministry of Commerce, March 14). With food price inflation in India unabated, there is no reason to assert that core inflation should have declined even if it has in the West. There is evidence that in India, food price inflation affects core inflation. This is not surprising after all, for food price inflation enters costs of the non-agricultural sector.

Second, the argument that corporate power underlies elevated core inflation is based on an observation of a somewhat short time period. It is true that while wholesale price inflation has eased very considerably in the six months preceding March 2023, consumer price (CP) inflation has not (National Statistical Office, March 13). But a mismatch between WP and CP inflations is not new. In 2021-22, WP inflation had surged by 12 percentage points but CP inflation actually declined (Reserve Bank of India, 2022). So, the maintenance of high price increases by firms in the retail sector even after wholesale price inflation has declined in 2022-23 may just be a compensating mechanism, i.e., the rising input cost of the retail sector is being passed on with a lag.

> Over 75% of the direct contribution to inflation is by sectors in which the five big corporates are unlikely to be represented in a big way

Third, attributing elevated core inflation in consumer prices, as wholesale prices fall, to pricing power of the Big 5 assumes that these conglomerates have a high presence in retail trade. On balance, one would expect their presence is greater in the manufacturing and infrastructure sectors than in retail. It may be noted that their presence in the economy itself may not be so high. Mr. Acharya is quoted as stating that they account for 12% of non-financial sector sales. To us, this does not signal high pricing power.

Fourth, to compare WP inflation with CP inflation, whether headline or core, is to acquiesce in a mismatch. The commodity basket corresponding to CP includes such items as housing, health, education, recreation and personal care which, naturally, do not enter the wholesale price index. So, we would be comparing apples with oranges here.

Finally, we come to the point that casts doubt most directly on the claim that corporate pricing power is driving current inflation in India. At present we have data for only the first three quarters of the financial year that just ended. However, in all of them, over 75% of the direct contribution to inflation is by sectors in which the Big 5 are unlikely to be represented in a big way, the contribution of food products alone being close to 50% in most time periods. Clearly, it is the rising price of food that is driving current inflation in India.

### There is pricing power

None of this is to suggest that corporate pricing power does not exist or that it is not relevant for inflation. Our own published work has shown that there is pricing power in Indian industry and that the rate of profit in India is high in a global comparison. However, the question is the extent to which corporate power is driving overall inflation in India currently, beyond its obvious role in elevating the price level. In theory, corporates can drive inflation if concentration rises continuously and if they come to dominate the economy, in this case retail trade. That we have not reached there yet in India is implied by the fact that the sectors in which the Big 5 are most represented account for less than 25% of the consumer price index. But industrial concentration is most likely rising in India, and the consequences matter for more than just prices.

While public policy in India has a history of being alert to concentration in industry, concentration in the services, as in telecommunications, and in infrastructure, as in ports, is relatively new and it may only just be coming to terms with its implications. As a democracy, India should guard against the potential use of countervailing power by any body pursuing a private interest, whether economic or social, and irrespective of its consequences for inflation. At the same time, it may be noted that India's corporate sector is diverse and Mr. Acharya's list includes at least one house that is perceived by the public as embodying business acumen, ethical practices and social responsibility.

In conclusion, we find the framing of the discourse on inflation in terms of core inflation, as when the role of corporate pricing power was brought up, to be limiting. Core inflation leaves out the inflation in food and fuel prices on grounds that these prices tend to fluctuate, evening out the changes, and thus not requiring a policy response. But this is a flawed assumption in the context of India's economy.

### The current inflation control strategy

In India, food prices have only risen, and in recent years their rate of inflation has been very high. For all the 'reforms' since 1991, the real price of food, i.e., its price relative to the general price level, has risen considerably. In the context, to measure inflation without considering the price of food is to exclude what matters most to the public, as opposed to central bankers. India's inflation control strategy is currently restricted to using the interest rate to dampen aggregate demand. It – conveniently for its champions – absolves the policymaker from addressing the challenge of ensuring the production of food at affordable prices. But, the most recent intervention purporting to explain core inflation in India may have had a beneficial fallout after all. It has re-emphasised that the RBI has been unable to control even that inflation which central banks are assumed to be able to.

# India must board the Online Dispute Resolution bus

Has India missed the bus in terms of becoming an international arbitration hub? Even if it has, India can still play catch up with Online Dispute Redressal (ODR).

At the Delhi Arbitration Weekend in February 2023, Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju emphasised the need for institutional arbitration to enhance the ease of doing business. India has shown tremendous improvement in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report, rising from the 142nd rank among 190 countries in 2014 to 63rd in 2019.

However, India is ranked 163rd, in 'Enforcing Contracts', which is a marginal improvement from the 186th rank in 2015 and 173rd in 2006. The report says it takes almost four years and 31% of the cost of the claim to enforce a contract in India; in contrast, it takes just over two years and costs 22% of the claim value in Brazil. In Mexico it is 341 days and 33% of claim value, and Vietnam 400 days, and 29% of claim value.

India opened up its economy in the 1990s, which was the decade of growth for international arbitration. As more countries entered into bilateral investment treaties, institutional arbitration became the preferred choice of resolution.

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### Setting things right

Although India introduced its first piece of legislation on arbitration and conciliation by the middle of the decade, it acquired a reputation of being 'arbitration-unfriendly', as the Srikrishna Committee pointed out in 2017, for several reasons – lack of preference for institutional arbitration over ad hoc arbitration, frequent interference from the judiciary from the appointment of arbitrators to the enforcement of awards, and setting aside of arbitral awards on grounds of 'public policy'.

The amendments of 2015 and 2019 and a few recent judicial decisions have put India on the right path. The scope for using 'public policy' as a ground for setting aside awards has been narrowed, and there is a focus on prioritising institutional arbitration. Yet, India is not a preferred arbitration destination, even for disputes between Indian businesses. Many still seek arbitration abroad, even when the dispute is with another Indian entity. Singapore, which opened its International Arbitration Centre (the Singapore International Arbitration Centre) in the 1990s when India was opening up for foreign investment, has since emerged as a global arbitration hub and is ranked first in terms of 'Enforcing Contracts'. Indian companies are among its top users.

> At a time when pendency is gnawing into the administration of justice, Online Dispute Redressal has the potential to ensure justice for all in India

### Technology as advantage

India can still make use of its strengths in technology and emerge a frontrunner in ODR, thanks to the almost universal dissemination of online technology during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the judiciary led the way with online hearings. ODR, which is about resolving disputes in a virtual environment, has several advantages. It can reduce the burden on the courts, save time and costs, and provide effective resolutions.

ODR involves more than just audio/video conferencing. It encompasses the integration of tools such as multi-channel communication, case management systems, automated case flows, digital signatures and stamping, and even the application of advanced technologies such as blockchain, natural language processing, artificial intelligence, and machine learning.

Private platforms in India are already resolving lakhs of disputes through ODR. Many corporates have migrated to ODR to resolve small-value disputes. NITI Aayog has rightly claimed that India is "uniquely positioned to emerge as the epicentre for the developments in ODR" due to the need for an efficient dispute resolution system and advancements in technology.

To facilitate this, the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary must work together. The Reserve Bank of India, the National Payments Corporation of India, and the Open Network for Digital Commerce and a few other institutions have led the way by incorporating ODR mechanisms into several of their initiatives. The need now is to disseminate these at a mass scale.

### Steps to consider

Three key measures can be considered. One, incentivise use of ODR by way of legislative measures such as setting ODR as a default dispute resolution tool for categories of disputes arising out of online transactions, fast-tracking enforcement of ODR outcomes, and exempting or reducing stamp duty and court fees.

Two, solve infrastructural challenges, curb the digital divide, and catalyse ODR's growth by optimising existing setups such as Aadhaar *kendras* to also function as ODR kiosks. Each court can have an ODR cell along with supplemental technical and administrative support. On the lines of the Finance Minister allocating ₹7,000 crore for the third phase of the e-Courts project in the Union Budget 2023 (aimed at digitising the justice system), a dedicated fund must be set up for furthering ODR.

Three, government departments should explore ODR as a grievance redress mechanism. Proactive use of ODR by government entities will not only increase trust in the process but also ensure that citizens have access to a convenient and cost-effective means of resolving disputes with the government.

At a time when pendency is gnawing into the very administration of justice, ODR has the potential to ensure justice for all, at everyone's fingertips. India may have missed the bus to become an arbitration hub, but it can still catch up and overtake them all – all online.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Bill cleared**

Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi 'rushing' to give his assent to the Tamil Nadu online gambling prohibition Bill must be viewed in the light of his recent remark: 'If the Governor withholds nod, it means Bill is dead'. One wonders whether it was the result of the strong resolution passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly urging the President and the government to make things clear to the Governor. The Governor must act according to the tenets of the Constitution and approve Bills on time without giving room for one to believe that they are acting against the interests of non-BJP ruled States, for obvious reasons.

**Tharcius S. Fernando,**
Chennai

**Police 'excesses'**

There seems to be a slowdown as far as justice is concerned in the case of alleged police excesses and custodial torture in Ambasamudram, Tamil Nadu (Inside pages, "FIR yet to be filed against Balveer Singh because Chief Minister is under pressure from the police: Balakrishnan", April 12). It is surprising and, at the same time, difficult to believe that the Chief Minister is "under pressure". There has to be justice in what are alleged to be abhorrent acts. The Chief Minister should act and ensure that there is no slack in all steps needed.

**Mani Nataraajan,**
Chennai

**RSS route marches**

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh may have won a judicial victory for its planned marches in Tamil Nadu, but it comes at great cost. While the RSS, as an organisation, has the constitutional right to parade in a peaceful manner, its reactionary doctrines are far removed from benevolence. These types of marches are never unifying, but further widen existing divisions and are nothing but triumphalist excursions to impose their will on sections of the population that are unwilling to accept them. It is also useful to recall the triumphalist "Protestant Orange Order" marches through many sensitive Catholic neighbourhoods in Northern Ireland, that still continues to manifest itself as a form of political deadlock even to the present day. In short, all sectarian marches extolling one's supremacy over other contending beliefs are pure propaganda, and are a toxic wedge that separates us even further.

**G. Parameswaran,**
Coimbatore

**Ulsoor Bazaar post office**

The innovative move to come up with a 3D printed post office in Cambridge Layout, Bengaluru, the first in the country, will not only boost the image of India Post but will also serve as a prestigious landmark in the Garden City of India. (April 11). The Indian postal service has lived through many changes. As the backbone of the nation's communication network, it occupies a special place in the hearts of millions. The 3D printed post office is another feather in the cap of India Post.

**R. Sivakumar,**
Chennai

To read more letters online, scan the QR code. Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

# The lesser-known battles of Maoist women

**R.K. Vij**

is a former Director General of Police of Chhattisgarh. Views are personal

All is not well in the Communist Party of India (Maoist) which, besides waging an armed struggle to capture political power, also claims to fight for gender equality. The Maoists profess discipline and integrity, but exploitation of women in the party is a stark reality. Women who join the party in the hope of bringing about a "revolution" for the proletariat and the landless class are often subject to the same structural violence that they are supposed to fight.

Women constitute 35%-40% of the total party members, but their representation in the Central Committee and the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) is negligible. As per recent reports, only one woman cadre, Sheela Marandi alias Hema, of Jharkhand is a Central Committee member out of a total of more than 20 members, and only two women cadres – Pothula Kalpana alias Mainakka and Jode Ratnabai alias Sujathakka – are DKSZC members out of approximately 20 members.

**Struggles in the jungle**

While jungle life is difficult for all cadres, the women have to face additional health challenges. While working women in mainstream society are fighting to get menstrual leave, women cadres in the CPI(Maoist) don't get even get sentry duty off and need to be alert all the time with a gun, said women cadres who surrendered to the police. In addition, they have to walk for miles daily to change their location. Women cadres said that only one loin cloth is provided to two women cadres to be shared as a sanitary napkin for six months. One half of a soap bar is given to each woman cadre during her period. Women are not permitted to liberally use water. Each cadre has to carry water in bottles for her own use. It is taboo to use water from streams or ponds for washing. Women are at the mercy of the unit commander who carries some medical necessities.

Most women who are not conscious of their nutrition intake, particularly iron, become anaemic. While the food given to the cadres is never wholesome, the surrendered cadres said that two articles are given additionally to each woman so that she can meet her protein requirements: half a kilogramme of jaggery and one kilogramme of peanuts or sesame seeds. A few eggs are given to those who do not like peanuts. The women cadres said they never found these provisions sufficient, and always felt tired and lethargic, particularly during their period.

According to documents seized during raids, marriage is permitted between willing partners, but only so that they can fight together, not so that they can enjoy family life. Male cadres are forced to undergo vasectomy either before marriage or immediately after marriage. In case a woman cadre gets pregnant, she has to undergo an abortion. She is either given medicine for this or sent to a quack or a dai belonging to the Swasthaya Vibhag (health branch) of the Revolutionary People's Committee. One MBBS doctor known by his Maoist name Rafique, who generally stays with the Central Committee members in the region, gives medical training to some cadres, but cannot handle abortion and related issues, said women cadres.

It is the junior cadres who mostly face discrimination. Available reports show that when Madavi Hademe alias Savitri, who was a Maoist cadre and wife of the former DKSZC Secretary, Ravula Ramanna, got pregnant, she was not only transferred from one division to another, but also sent on maternity leave for about two years. Obviously, neither was Ramanna forced to undergo vasectomy nor was Savitri asked to undergo an abortion. Their child named Ravula Ranjith alias Srikanth studied until Class 10 at a school in Nizamabad. Thus, the leader was allowed to break rules with impunity instead of setting an example for others.

> Women who join the party are often subject to the same structural violence that they are supposed to fight

**Sexual exploitation**

Sexual exploitation of women is not uncommon in the party. Senior Maoist leaders told the press that when GVK Prasad alias Gudsa Usendi, then a DKSZC member and its spokesperson, surrendered before the Andhra Pradesh police in 2014, he fled with his third wife Santoshi. His first wife Savita had died in an exchange of fire, and he left his second wife Raje without giving any justification to the party. The party has a code of conduct for solemnising marriage, but is silent on issues of divorce and polygamy. It is true that disciplinary action is taken against cadres for moral turpitude, such as establishing a sexual relationship before marriage or making sexual advances against the wishes of a woman cadre, but the maximum punishment is only suspension for a year or demotion. The cadres do not have to face the brunt of the Maoist's 'people's court' where villagers are killed on the ground of mere suspicion, and that too in front of their family members.

There are instances of women cadres dying by suicide on account of ill treatment or suspicion. For instance, a woman cadre, Kaushalya, shot herself after her husband, a member of another Maoist unit, objected to her talking in a friendly way with a male member of her platoon. Such incidents are not uncommon, said surrendered cadres.

It is not disputed that most of the lower cadres do not have any revolutionary zeal; they are temporarily allured towards the gun culture of the Maoists. While the surrender and rehabilitation policies of the State and the Central government are quite comprehensive with attractive returns, some additional incentives may be doled out for the women cadres to wean them away from the outfit. They need to realise that even in the party they are fighting for, they are in a disadvantageous position.

# A milk plan gone sour

The BJP's political strategy in the dairy sector seems to be in a state of disarray

STATE OF PLAY

**Sharath S. Srivatsa**
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Over the last four months, the Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) has featured in the political narrative frequently. With the State heading to the polls, the Congress and Janata Dal (Secular), which have been raising prominently the issue of regional pride, have been involved in a bitter fight with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has been countering their narrative with a nationalist one.

A series of developments involving the Nandini brand marketed by the KMF has resonated with the electorate, especially in the politically charged Old Mysore region, where the votes of the dominant and largely agrarian Vokkaligas matter.

In December 2022, in Mandya in the Vokkaliga heartland, Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah spoke of the need for cooperation between KMF and Amul, the largest milk cooperative, in technology and marketing initiatives to ensure the growth of the Indian dairy industry. The JD(S) and Congress interpreted this as an effort to merge KMF with Amul. Mr. Shah's statement in Mandya, read alongside his earlier statement in Guwahati that a multi-State cooperative society would be created by merging five cooperative societies with Amul, was viewed as a threat to subsume the State's own brand under the Gujarat-based milk behemoth. This led to an exchange of barbs between the BJP and the Opposition for days despite top BJP leaders, including the Chief Minister, issuing statements denying a merger.




In the last one month, KMF has again been at the centre of the political arena as the Opposition has blamed the government's "deliberate mismanagement" of the KMF for the perceived shortage of milk for about a week. Soon after, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) issued an order to KMF and Aavin in Tamil Nadu asking them to label curd as "dahi." It was forced to withdraw the order when Tamil Nadu and Karnataka opposed the move.

Currently, the political storm is over Amul announcing its entry into the Bengaluru market through sales of milk and curd on online portals, thus breaching an unwritten understanding between the two successful cooperatives that they will not compete with each other on their respective turfs. This, however, is not Amul's first foray into Karnataka. It has been selling milk in the Mumbai-Karnataka region for the last seven years, and its other milk products have been available on shelves for a long time. The Opposition sees this as yet another attempt to undermine KMF. Statements by BJP leaders have also added fuel to the fire. For instance, BJP general secretary C.T. Ravi asked why people were opposing "Bharatiya brand Amul." The KMF said that it was capable of meeting market challenges and there was no proposal for merger, but this almost went unheard in the din.

There are about 28 lakh members of milk societies in Karnataka. The total votes of their families are almost 50 lakh. They also hold the key to the BJP's foray into the Vokkaliga heartland which contributes the bulk of the KMF's membership. The BJP's previous attempt to woo the members of these districts failed even though the post of KMF chairman went to saffron party leaders during the BJP's rule. Current chairman Balachandra Jarkiholi's statement that he is the only BJP leader in the KMF, which is dominated by Congress and JD(S) leaders, shows the political clout of the Opposition at the grassroots in the hinterland.

The BJP, which has been trying to make big inroads in the Old Mysore region, has added to the confusion. Its attempt to break the Opposition's stranglehold on societies by launching a new milk bank to wean away members is yet to take shape. Milk producers are in distress: production is falling due to lumpy skin disease and they get lower remuneration despite input costs going up. After holding down milk prices for nearly two years, the government approved a raise of ₹2 a litre while KMF's demand was ₹5 a litre. The ₹5 per litre financial incentive has not been paid to the farmers by the government for nearly six months, and dues are over ₹450 crore. The farmers hold this against the government.

With elections less than a month away, the BJP's political strategy in the dairy sector seems to be in disarray and faces a serious challenge from the Opposition, which continues to hold sway over the dairy farmers, most of whom depend on KMF for subsistence.

# Karnataka Assembly hosts many of India's richest MLAs

MLAs in Karnataka have on average assets worth ₹34.6 crore, the highest among all the States

DATA POINT

**Rebecca Rose Varghese, Jasmin Nihalani & Vignesh Radhakrishnan**

Karnataka, which is going to the polls in less than a month, hosts many of India's richest MLAs in its Assembly. On average, a Karnataka MLA has assets worth ₹34.6 crore, the highest among all the States. With assets worth ₹27.9 crore on average, Andhra Pradesh MLAs come second. Maharashtra MLAs, with assets worth ₹22.4 crore, come third. These conclusions are based on the Association for Democratic Reform's finance reports of MLAs. The data pertain to MLAs elected during the latest Assembly elections in each State and not to sitting MLAs.

**Chart 1** shows the State-wise average assets of an MLA in ₹ crore. In general, the southern and western regions host many of the richest MLAs in terms of assets. On the other hand, the eastern States host relatively poor MLAs. For instance, in the south, the average assets held by MLAs crossed ₹25 crore in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In the west, the average assets crossed ₹20 crore in Goa and Maharashtra. But in the east, the average assets did not cross ₹5 crore in Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand or Bihar. Kerala, along with the north-eastern States of Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram and Assam, also hosts relatively poor MLAs.

**Chart 2** shows the average assets in ₹ crore for various party-State combinations. For this analysis, only parties that had at least 30 MLAs in a State were considered. The Congress in Karnataka leads other party-State combinations by a wide margin. Karnataka Congress MLAs have, on average, assets worth ₹60 crore. They are followed by Janata Dal (Secular) MLAs with average assets worth ₹23.5 crore and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLAs with average assets of ₹17.4 crore.

With ₹27 crore, BJP MLAs in Maharashtra have the second-highest average assets among all the party-State combinations. MLAs of the YSR Congress Party with average assets of ₹22.4 crore also have relatively rich MLAs.

**Chart 3** shows the change in re-elected MLAs' average assets in the latest State election compared to previous polls. Each circle corresponds to a party-State combination and circle sizes correspond to the number of re-elected MLAs. Only those parties with at least five re-elected MLAs were considered. The average assets of re-elected Congress MLAs in Karnataka increased by ₹43.5 crore on average or 108% in the latest polls compared to previous elections. The average assets of the re-elected MLAs of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) increased by ₹32 crore or 78%. The average assets of the re-elected MLAs of the Assam BJP increased by 124% or ₹2.5 crore. In Maharashtra, the average assets of re-elected BJP MLAs increased by 81% or ₹12.4 crore; those of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLAs increased by 123% or ₹10 crore; and those of the Shiv Sena increased by 135% or ₹10.7 crore. In terms of an increase in average assets of re-elected MLAs, most parties in Maharashtra stood out.

**Chart 4** shows the assets of individual MLAs in ₹ crore as declared in the latest State elections. With assets of over ₹1,000 crore, N. Nagaraju (M.T.B) who got elected from a Congress ticket in Karnataka but later joined the BJP, is the richest among all the MLAs, followed by D.K. Shivakumar from the Congress and Karnataka with over ₹840 crore.

With over ₹650 crore, Nara Chandrababu Naidu of the TDP in Andhra Pradesh and Jayanthibhai Somabhai Patel of the BJP in Gujarat follow closely. With over ₹400 crore, Parag Shah and Mangalprabhat Lodha, both from the BJP, are the richest MLAs from Maharashtra by a wide margin.

## Charting the growth of MLAs' assets

The charts are based on data collated from reports prepared by the Association for Democratic Reforms

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Chart 1 | The chart shows the State-wise average assets of an MLA in ₹ crore

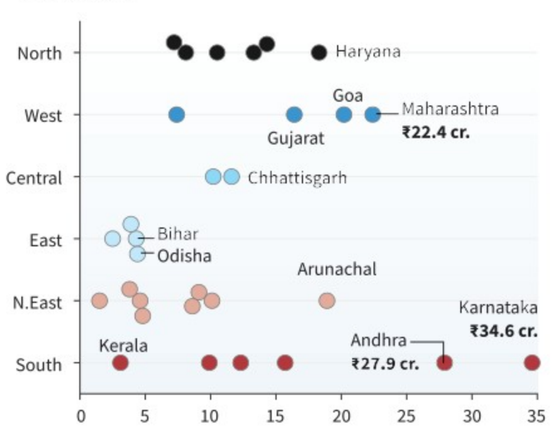



Chart 2 | The chart shows the average assets in ₹ crore for various party-State combinations.

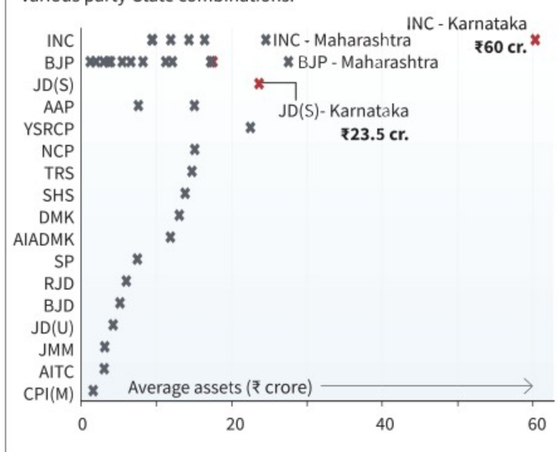



Chart 3 | The change in re-elected MLAs' average assets in the latest election compared to the previous Polls. BJP (●) INC (●)

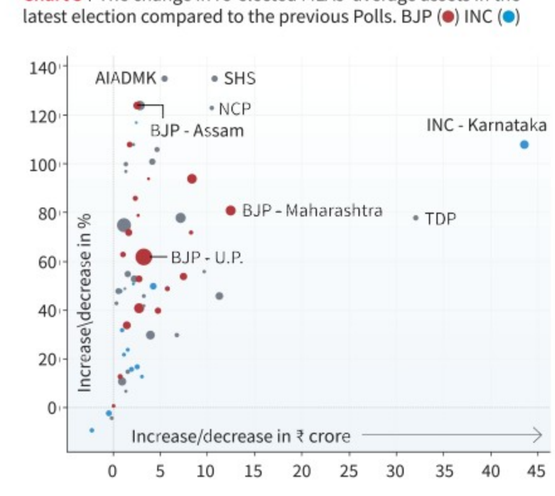
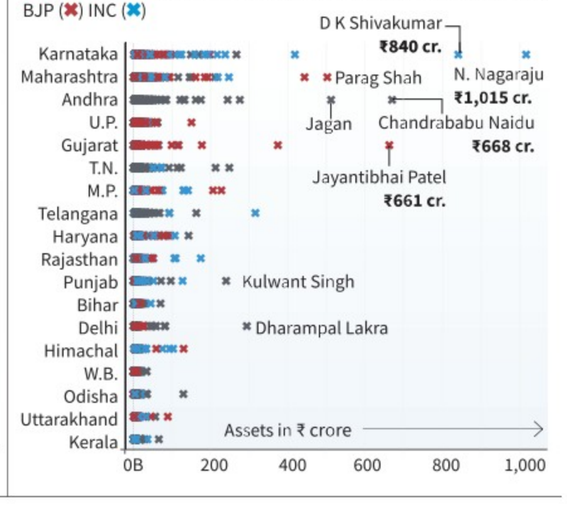



Chart 4 | The chart shows the assets of individual MLAs in ₹ crore BJP (✖) INC (✖)




FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 13, 1973

## Steps to prevent fraudulent cheque alterations

Bombay, April 12: Mr. B.N. Adarkar, Chairman of the Indian Banks' Association, said that the Association had devoted considerable attention to evolving preventive measures against forgeries or fraudulent alteration of cheques and drafts. Mr. Adarkar, who was addressing the annual general meeting of the Association, said that it had also developed certain measures which could be readily employed by the banks. In addition, the Association had set up a temporary laboratory where a young chemist had been engaged during the last four months in testing the effects of various known chemicals used by forgers to make alterations in cheques and drafts. The chemist had also studied the suitability, from the point of view of preventing forgeries, of different varieties of security paper, printing and writing inks and colours as well as methods of printing. On the basis of these experiments, the chemist had made some interesting suggestions as to how the selection of paper and the printing of cheques and drafts could be improved in individual banks. The Secretary would forward these suggestions to the banks concerned for their consideration. Mr. Adrakar referred to the various legislative measures which had recently been taken by the Central and State Governments to take over the ownership and/or management of industrial undertakings, such as cotton textile mills, sugar mills, engineering works or coal mines and said that banks would certainly co-operate with the Government in implementing these measures, which had been taken in public interest to safeguard production and employment.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 13, 1923

## Mortality in presidency

The Director of Public Health, Madras, has sent us the following report of mortality from epidemic diseases in the districts and towns of the Madras Presidency during the week ending the 7th April 1923: Districts Rural: 62 deaths from plague, 50 from cholera and 126 from small pox were reported, the number of affected districts being 5,6 and 17 respectively. The districts which returned a large mortality from these diseases are the following:

Plague: Bellary (27); Salem (19)
Cholera: South Arcot (37)
Small pox: Malabar (38); South Arcot (28)

## From Page One

### India sees over 7,800 COVID cases in a day

The top Ministry official added that the subvariant's prevalence increased from 21.6% in February to 35.8% in March.

The Health Ministry said that there is no shortage of COVID-19 vaccines. "There is enough, and the Central government is not keen to over-procure and then waste these vaccines. These vaccines are now available at very competitive prices in the market and in the government sector. States are also advised to buy as per need,'' a Health Ministry official said.

Serum Institute of India CEO Adar Poonawalla tweeted on Wednesday: "As COVID cases have been rising again with Omicron XBB & its variants, it can be severe for the elderly. I'd suggest for the elderly, mask up & take the Covovax booster which is now available on the CoWIN app. It is excellent against all variants & is approved in the U.S. & Europe."

### Nitish, Tejashwi call on Congress leaders

"Nitish*ji* will prove to be the architect of Opposition unity in the 2024 Lok Sabha election," said a tweet from the official handle of his party, the Janata Dal-United [JD(U)].

However, a Congress leader who was part of the meeting said, "In today's meeting, there was neither a discussion on common Lok Sabha seats nor convener's role for Nitish Kumar. The focus was on uniting more parties and working out a common programme as parties have realised its importance after Rahul*ji*'s disqualification from the Lok Sabha."

Addressing a joint press conference at his residence after the meeting, Mr. Kharge said the Opposition would together protect the Constitution and democracy while giving a new direction to the country.

"Today, we have had final discussions and on that basis, we will move ahead and talk to others on the way forward. All those who agree will meet again," the Bihar Chief Minister said, adding, "When we meet next, you will see a lot of people."

Asked how many Opposition parties are expected to come together, Mr. Gandhi said, "This is a process and we will develop the Opposition's vision for the country and all those parties that will come together with us, we will fight the ongoing ideological fight together. We will unitedly stand against the attack on institutions and the attack on the country."

**Reaching out**

The Congress chief's Wednesday meeting comes days after he had worked the phone lines to speak to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, apart from Mr. Kumar.

The Bihar Chief Minister is now expected reach out to other key leaders such as Trinamool Congress chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, her Telangana counterpart and Bharat Rashtra Samithi chief K. Chandrasekhar Rao, and Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, among others who have maintained a distance from the Congress.

### Consumer inflation eases to 5.66% in March

This is higher than the 6.5% average price rise projected by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in February.

While pausing interest rate hikes to check inflation in its monetary policy review this month, the RBI has projected price rise to moderate to 5.2% this year, with the April to June quarter averaging 5.1% inflation. The same quarter had clocked an average price rise of 7.28% in 2022.

**Relief for rural consumers**

Rural consumers saw a sharper dip in inflation as it eased from 6.72% in February to 5.51% in March, while the statistical relief for their urban counterparts was minimal, as their price rise dropped only marginally from 6.1% to 5.89% over the same period.

Within food items, vegetables remained in deflationary mode, with prices dropping 8.5% year-on-year. Oil prices also fell for the second month in a row, with the price correction from a year ago quickening from 0.5% in February to 7.9% in March. Meat and fish prices dropped 1.4% last month from March 2022 levels, as opposed to a 3.4% inflation recorded this February.

However, cereals, milk and spices inflation remained significantly high, while fruit prices surged 7.6% in March compared to 6.4% in February. Price rise in cereals eased only marginally from 16.7% in February to 15.3% in March. Similarly, milk inflation dropped slightly from 9.65% to 9.31% in February, while spices inflation was 18.2% in March after a three-month spell over 20%.

**Moderate drop forecast**

The steep drop in headline inflation was aided by a high base effect, which is expected to keep the inflation rate lower at least in the entire first quarter of 2023-24, said CRISIL chief economist Dharmakirti Joshi. Assuming normal southwest monsoon rains and only a limited impact from unseasonal rain last month, Mr. Joshi expects food inflation to ease notably and fuel prices to trend down this year.

# Four jawans shot dead in Bathinda military station

It is neither a terrorist attack nor an attack from outside, but a fratricidal incident, say senior Punjab Police officials after initial investigation

**The Hindu Bureau**
CHANDIGARH

Four jawans were killed in a shooting inside a military station at Bathinda in Punjab in the early hours of Wednesday, the Army said. The State police ruled out a "terrorist attack".

No person has been detained or arrested.

A statement released by the South Western Command of the Army said the jawans of an artillery unit died of gunshot injuries. An Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) rifle, along with the magazine, was recovered later in the day.

The statement said "all aspects, including the possible case of involvement of the INSAS rifle, along with 28 rounds, reported missing two days ago were being ascertained".

"A search team has located the INSAS rifle along with the magazine. Army and police joint teams will now be undertaking a forensic analysis of the weapon for ascertaining further details," it said.

**Strict vigil:** Soldiers standing next to a barricade outside the military station at Bathinda in Punjab on Wednesday. REUTERS

Additional Director-General of Police Surinder Pal Singh Parmar said, "It is not a terrorist attack, it is not an attack from outside. It is a fratricidal incident."

After the firing was reported around 4.35 a.m., the station's quick reaction teams were activated and the area was cordoned off and sealed.

An FIR has been registered based on a complaint by a Major. The complaint said some unidentified masked persons were seen at the spot, one with an INSAS rifle and another with an axe. They were seen running towards a forest near the military station.

# Stalin asks States to pass resolutions to fix time limit for Governors to clear Bills

**The Hindu Bureau**
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president, M.K. Stalin, has urged the Chief Ministers of the States ruled by parties other than the BJP to get resolutions passed in their Assemblies urging the "Union government and the President to fix a time limit for Governors to approve the Bills passed by the Legislatures". The Tamil Nadu Assembly passed such a resolution recently.

In his letter on Tuesday, Mr. Stalin said Indian democracy was at a crossroads and "increasingly we are witnessing the fading away of the spirit of cooperative federalism from the governance of the nation".

"The Constitution has clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the Union and State governments along with the role of the Governor. However, it is observed that such time-tested principles are neither respected nor followed now, affecting the functioning of the State governments. Some Governors today are indefinitely holding various Bills that have been duly passed by the State Legislatures and sent for approval which brings the respective State administrations to a standstill," he said. Mr. Stalin added that efforts were taken to clarify the doubts and concerns raised by the Governor on the Bills, but they had failed.

M.K. Stalin

**Seeking support**

"We came to know that many other States have similar issues, we in Tamil Nadu deemed it fit to pass a resolution in our State Assembly urging the Union government and the President to fix a time limit for the Governors to approve the Bills passed by the respective Legislatures. I am enclosing an extract of the resolution passed by the Tamil Nadu State Legislative Assembly yesterday (10-4-2023) for your kind perusal. I am sure that you will agree with the spirit and content of the resolution, and extend your support in this regard to uphold the sovereignty and self-respect of the State governments and the Legislatures by passing a similar resolution in your State Assembly," he said.

The DMK and its allies – the Congress, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi, MDMK, CPI, CPI(M), Tamilaga Valvurimai Katchi, IUML, Manithaneya Makkal Katchi, Kongu Nadu Makkal Katchi and Dravidar Kazhagam – jointly protested in Chennai against Governor R.N. Ravi for acting against the interests of the democratically elected State government.

# Israel's ministerial visits to India might include FTA talks

**Kallol Bhattacherjee**
NEW DELHI

An India-Israel free trade agreement (FTA) is expected to be on the agenda during the upcoming visit of Israeli Economy Minister Nir Barkat, sources in Tel Aviv have told *The Hindu*.

The visit by Mr. Barkat is likely to be followed by the visit of Foreign Minister Eli Cohen to India.

The back-to-back official interactions are being interpreted as a prelude to the arrival of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in India.

"While this upcoming delegation will focus on promoting business relations between our countries, the Cohen delegation will focus on the bilateral relations on wider fronts. I call on the parties to resume discussion on the FTA," said Anat Bernstein-Reich, president of the Israel-Asia Chamber of Commerce, which will be a part of the delegation of Mr. Barkat and plays an important role in advancing India-Israel business interest.

Mr. Barkat who served as the Mayor of Jerusalem from 2008 to 2018, was at the forefront of championing the Netanyahu government's agenda.

It has been learnt that during the next week's visit, fintech, cybersecurity, climate tech and the automotive sectors are likely to be taken up by the two sides.

The long-pending issue of an FTA between India and Israel was revived last year when Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announced that India was planning to restart dialogue in that direction.

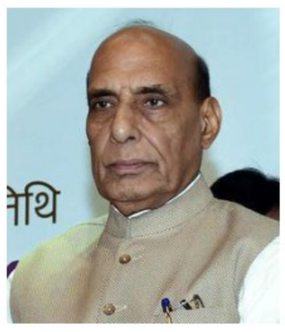
The announcement which came in the backdrop of the successful conclusion of an FTA between India and the UAE was perceived as a positive sign.

# Follow 'gold standard of open tender' route in defence procurement, says Rajnath

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

In the case of procurement of defence platforms and equipment, either under capital or revenue route, the "gold standard of open tender" should be adopted to the extent possible, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Wednesday, stressing the need to maximise the value of money spent on security needs.

"A competitive bid-based procurement process, which is open to all, is the best possible way to realise the full value of the public money being spent. There would be some rare cases when it may not be possible to go for an open tender process. Such instances should come under exceptions and exceptions should not become the rule," he said, addressing the International Conference on Defence Finance and Economics.



Rajnath Singh

It is pertinent to note that some of the biggest deals signed recently have been through Inter-Governmental Agreements which include 36 Rafale fighter jets, S-400 long-range air defence systems and four stealth frigates.

**Transparent system**

While stressing the need to devise innovative methods to maximise the value of money spent on the security needs of the country, terming a robust defence finance system as the backbone of a strong military, Mr. Singh observed that it is difficult to apply the economic concept of full value of money in defence expenditure, as in this sector, there is no visible revenue stream and no easily identifiable beneficiaries.

Mr. Singh underscored the importance of comprehensive Blue Books, codifying the rules and procedures of procurement of defence equipment and systems for a fair and transparent system and referred to the Defence Acquisition Procedure, 2020 for capital acquisition; Defence Procurement Manual for revenue procurement and Delegation of Financial Powers to Defence Services. "These manuals play a very important role in ensuring that the process of defence procurement is rule-bound," he stated.

# Ukraine to address needs of medical students: MEA

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

Ukraine's First Deputy Foreign Minister Emine Dzhaparova handed over a letter from President Volodymyr Zelensky to Prime Minister Narendra Modi during her three-day India visit that concluded on Wednesday.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement that Ukraine would address certain academic requirements of the Indian students who were affected by the conflict that broke out in February 2022 and informed that her "visit to India would facilitate cooperation between the two countries".

"Ms. Dzhaparova mentioned that Ukraine will allow foreign medical students to take the Unified State Qualification Exam in their country of domicile," said the MEA in a statement.

# Tejas, Rafale, Sukhoi to face off with U.S. fighter jets at Cope India 23

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

The light combat aircraft Tejas, Rafale, Su-30MKI and Jaguars of the Indian Air Force (IAF) are all set to undertake manoeuvres with F-15 fighters and B-1B long-range bombers of the U.S. Air Force (USAF) from Thursday under the second phase of the ongoing bilateral air exercise, Cope India 23.

In a rare gesture, General Kenneth S. Wilsbach, Commander, U.S. Pacific Air Forces (COMPACAF), who is visiting India, undertook a sortie in a Russian-origin Su-30MKI fighter of the IAF on Tuesday during the exercise at the Kalaikunda air base.

"This segment of the exercise will witness participation of B-1B bombers of USAF. F-15 fighter aircraft of the USAF will also join the exercise subsequently," an IAF statement said. The IAF element will include the Su-30MKI, Rafale, Tejas and Jaguar fighter aircraft. Japan is taking part in the exercise as an observer. The exercise will be supported by aerial refuellers, Airborne Warning and Control System and Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft of the IAF," the statement said. The exercise will conclude on April 24.

**Aerial combat:** A USAF B-1B long-range bomber during a training mission over England. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The first phase of the exercise began on April 20.

This is the first time ever that U.S. bombers will be taking part in a military exercise in India. B-1B bombers had earlier done flybys during Aero India on two occasions.

# U.P. Police arrest Hindu outfit leader, three aides in Agra cow slaughter case

**Ishita Mishra**
AGRA

The Uttar Pradesh Police on Wednesday arrested Sanjay Jat, national spokesperson of the Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha, and three of his aides in connection with a case of cow slaughter in Agra.

"Sanjay Jat, Jitendra Kushwaha, Brajesh Bhadoria and Saurabh Sharma have been produced in court. It has come to light that they had enmity with four persons and wanted to implicate them in the case," Rakesh Kumar Singh, Assistant Commissioner of Police, Chhatta, said.

On March 30, members of the right-wing group reported the killing of a cow at Gautam Nagar in Agra amid Ram Navami festivities. An FIR was lodged based on a complaint filed by Mr. Kushwaha, who accused four Muslim men of committing the crime, a senior police officer said.

**Plot unveiled:** The arrested members of the right-wing group in front of the police commissionerate in Agra. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The police found the carcass in the area and picked up one of the Muslim men from his house at 3 a.m. However, investigation revealed that the Muslim men were not involved in the case.

The police said Mr. Jat's aide, Jhallu, was a butcher of cattle and the Muslim men were his competitors.

Mr. Jhallu and his associates allegedly caught a cow, killed it and alerted Mr. Jat, who informed the Etmaddulah police station.

"Two of the accused were cow traders and Jhallu's business competitors. He held a grudge against the other two," the officer said.

*(With inputs from Mayank Kumar)*

# ‘Opposition grouping will be a confederacy of the corrupt’

Anurag Thakur says the parties are gathering on one platform to save their political existence, their alliance will be a *thugbandhan*, and people know that they have no policy, no leadership

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

Union Information and Broadcasting Minister and BJP leader Anurag Thakur on Wednesday said a united Opposition would not be a political alliance but a “confederacy of corrupt parties”.

“When parties immersed in the quagmire of corruption come together, a *thugbandhan* is formed. People know that they have no policy, no intention, no leadership. These gimmicks will not hide their corruption,” Mr. Thakur told presspersons as Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and other Opposition leaders met with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge here for talks on a unified grouping.

> When there is a flaw in the intention, the public never votes and this is what is happening with these [Opposition] parties
>
> **ANURAG THAKUR**
> Union Minister

“In fact, this is not an alliance but a confederacy of corrupt parties. When there is a flaw in the intention, the public never votes and this is what is happening with these parties. Public is denying them again and again. In 2014 and 2019, they formed a *thugbandhan* here, but the result was the same. The people rejected the corrupt parties and formed the government with absolute majority twice under the leadership of Modi*ji*. No matter how many alliances are formed, the public has again made up its mind to raise the ‘lotus’ [BJP election symbol] in all the upcoming elections,” he said.

**India under Modi**

“The competition of this alliance is with [Prime Minister] Narendra Modi*ji*, who has been serving the country for 22 years first as CM and now as PM with full honesty and a clean image without taking any leave. India, which was in fragile five economies in 2014, is today in the top five,” Mr. Thakur said.

“Today, we are number one in steel and milk production, number two in mobile production. India is the fastest growing large economy in the world. India is number three in start-up ecosystem. There is no competition anywhere. We thank the public that they made Modi*ji* the Prime Minister so that the work of COVID management could be done, good work could be done,” he added.

“When the country is rising all over the world due to Modi’s policies,” the Opposition was “gathering on one platform to save their political existence”, the Union Minister said.

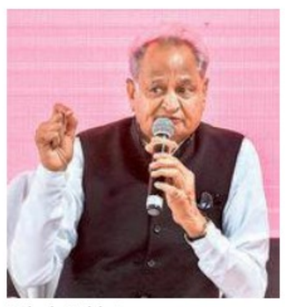
# Gehlot side-steps questions on Sachin Pilot’s fast, Delhi leadership remains mum

**The Hindu Bureau**
JAIPUR/NEW DELHI

The Congress leadership in Delhi and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot maintained a studied silence on former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot’s day-long fast demanding action in cases of alleged corruption under the previous Vasundhara Rajeled BJP government in the State.

On Monday night, the party’s Rajasthan incharge, Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, issued a statement appealing for a “calm dialogue” and asserting that the “day-long fast” will be deemed an “anti-party activity”.

Addressing a press conference in Jaipur announcing the launch of “inflation relief camps” from April 24, Mr. Gehlot sidestepped



Ashok Gehlot

questions on the issue. He said his government’s aim was to ease inflation and provide relief to the common people. “This is our only focus, and we are not going to deviate from it,” he said.

Mr. Gehlot said the Anti-Corruption Bureau had set the best record of acting against graft, something which had not happened in any other State. “The ACB has even raided IAS and IPS officers found involved in corrupt practices. But many people say that more raids of ACB point to high levels of corruption in the State... That is certainly a wrong way of looking at it,” he said.

Without making a direct reference to the alleged corruption cases and scandals during the previous BJP regime, Mr. Gehlot said the ACB would continue taking strict action.

In Delhi, Mr. Randhawa met party president Mallikarjun Kharge. According to sources in Mr. Kharge’s office, no report was submitted and no action plan discussed during the 30-minute meeting.

Mr. Pilot, soon after the hunger strike on Tuesday, left for Delhi for a family engagement. Sources close to him said he did not meet the Delhi leadership or Mr. Randhawa on Wednesday.

# Newspaper Society seeks withdrawal of new rules on fact-checking

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

The Indian Newspaper Society (INS) on Wednesday urged the Centre to withdraw the IT Rules amendment notified on April 6, stating that it would have the effect of the government or its designated agency enjoying “absolute” and “arbitrary” power to determine what was fake or not in respect of its own work, and order its take-down from platforms.

**Call for consultation**

It also sought “widespread and meaningful consultations with stakeholders such as the media and press bodies before coming out with any notification which would have serious implications on the profession of media and its credibility”.

The amendment empowers the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology to constitute a fact-checking unit which will ascertain what is “fake or false or misleading” with respect to “any business of the Central government”.

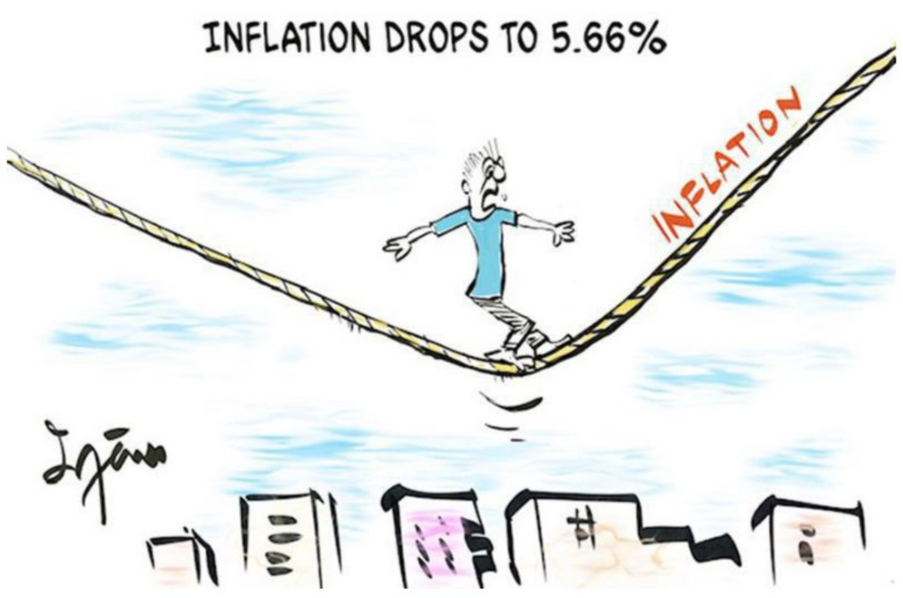
The unit will also have the authority to issue instructions to intermediaries, including social media platforms, Internet Service Providers and other service providers, not to host such content or remove them.

“Such power is seen to be arbitrary, as it is exercised without hearing the parties, and thus a violation of the principles of natural justice and has the effect of the complainant acting as the judge,” said the INS statement.

It said the rules did not specify as to what would be the governing mechanism for such a unit, what sort of judicial oversight would be available, whether there would be the right to appeal and so on.

All this tantamounts to censorship of the press and thus a violation of the principle of freedom of expression, said the society.

## *On the draw*




# SC asks if Mishra report can be used to decide on quota for Dalit converts

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said that a 2007 report of the Justice Ranganath Mishra Commission for Religious and Linguistic Minorities, which recommended Scheduled Caste reservation for Dalit converts to Christianity and Islam, is not all that “perfunctory”, adding that the government may need to “re-check” its stance on the report.

The oral observation by Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, a member of a three-judge Bench headed by Justice S.K. Kaul, comes a few months after the Centre discredited the report as “myopic”, and something prepared within the “four walls of a room”.

The Centre recently constituted a new commission headed by former Chief Justice of India K.G. Balakrishnan, giving it two years to prepare a report. On Wednesday, the court rekindled interest in the Mishra report, asking whether its empirical data could be used to determine if the exclusion of Dalit converts to Christianity and Islam from the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 was discriminatory and unconstitutional.

It also said that the government may need to “re-check” its stance on the report.

The court fixed the hearing for July. The Bench was hearing a series of petitions filed 19 years ago, which had challenged the exclusion of Dalit converts to Islam and Christianity from the 1950 Order.

**Social stigma**

The government has argued that Dalits who converted to Christianity or Islam to overcome the burdens of caste cannot claim reservation benefits enjoyed by those who chose to stay back in the Hindu religious system.

But Justice Amanullah said that social stigma may continue to be attached to members of historically backward communities among Hindus who convert to Islam and Christianity to overcome caste oppression. Justice Kaul said that the court would look into the question of whether the “caste system can be imported into Islam and Christianity”.

Additional Solicitor-General K.M. Nataraj said that the court should first wait for the Justice Balakrishnan Commission to complete its inquiry.

“Unless there is a categorical study of the current data, etc, there is no question of going into the constitutional issues now. The Commission is doing its work,” Mr. Nataraj argued.

Petitioners’ lawyers, including senior advocates C.U. Singh and Colin Gonsalves and advocates Prashant Bhushan, Franklin Ceasar Thomas and others, urged the court to examine the issue on the basis of the “authoritative” empirical data collated by the Ranganath Mishra Commission, as well as 20 other reports and studies done over the years into the issue.

# Rahul’s case a litmus test for judiciary, says Congress

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

Rahul Gandhi’s conviction and disqualification from the Lok Sabha is “deeply flawed” in law and is a “litmus test” for the Indian judiciary, Congress leader Anand Sharma said on Wednesday as he expressed hope “it will be corrected”.

A sessions court in Surat is scheduled to hear Mr. Gandhi’s appeal on Thursday for a stay on his conviction in the criminal defamation case that led to his disqualification from the Lok Sabha.

Addressing a press conference here at the AICC headquarters, Mr. Sharma said if the same yardstick were to be applied to every politician, then “India’s Parliament would have been hollowed out”.

“Most major leaders of political parties would have been out of Parliament for decades. That has not happened,” he said. “This will be a litmus test for the Indian judiciary too. I have no doubt that what is wrong will be corrected, a flawed decision in law will be reversed and I say that of my understanding in law and Constitution,” he said.

Mr. Sharma attacked the Modi government over its handling of the economy.

He said that India’s democracy was being made “dysfunctional not by default but by design”. He said while Prime Minister Narendra Modi was celebrating the new Parliament building, democracy was shrinking in the country.

# ‘MVA should speak in one voice publicly’

**The Hindu Bureau**
PUNE

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar on Wednesday said that while each party may have differing views over an issue, all three Maha Vikas Aghadi constituents – NCP, Congress and Shiv Sena (UBT) – should publicly “speak with one voice”.

The statement comes a day after Uddhav Thackeray’s 90- minute meeting with Mr. Pawar in Mumbai, amid fresh speculation of a rift and coordination woes within the MVA.

“Accordingly, it was decided that [top] leaders of all three parties should participate in joint programmes,” Mr. Pawar said.

Meanwhile, stressing that there were “no differences” within the MVA alliance, Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut said the talks between the leaders was extremely constructive and the future course of the alliance was discussed.

Echoing Mr. Raut, the Maharashtra Congress said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was deliberately spreading misinformation about alleged disunity between the MVA partners as it was wary of the growing strength of the Opposition.

# ‘Purchase of wheat moving at tardy pace’

CHANDIGARH: Leader of the Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda alleged that wheat purchase was moving at a tardy pace, and that Haryana government had failed to compensate farmers for crop loss.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FISHERIES POST HARVEST TECHNOLOGY & TRAINING**
Ministry of Fisheries Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Deptt. Of Fisheries
P.B. No. 1801, Kochi-682 016, Tel: 0484-2361317. Email: ifpchn@nic.in, Web: ifpkochi.gov.in

NIF/COM/1-8/2017 **TENDER NOTICE (E-TENDER)** Dated: 05.04.2023
**TENDER ID: 2023_DADF_747744_1**

E-Tenders are invited for leasing out of Sashimi Grade Tuna Plant/Chilled fish Export Processing facility at NIFPHATT. Cochin-16 from registered exporters of MPEDA.

Document download Sart date : 06.04.2023
Closing date : 02.05.2023
Bid Opening date : 05.05.2023
Details can be downloaded from **https://eprocure.gov.in** or **ifpkochi.gov.in**

Sd/- Director

**UTTARAKHAND CIVIL AVIATION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**
Doon Helidrome Dehradun, Sahastradhara Road, P.O Kulhan, Pincode 248013 Tel. 0135 2608981

Letter No. 8075/UCADA/2023 Date: 12 Apr, 2023
**RE-TENDER**

**Request for Proposals through e-procurement portal for purchasing of Emergency Locater Transmitter ARTEX ELT Model-C406-2HM P/N-453-5001 (Qty-01) for use on our Helicopter VT-UAA.**

1. Date of downloading tender document at uktenders.gov.in : 12/04/2023 Time 1500 HRS
2. Last Date for submission of Tender : 17/04/2023 Time 1500 HRS
3. Date of opening of Technical Bid : 17/04/2023 Time 1600 HRS
4. Date of opening of financial bids:- Shall be intimated later by email to the technically qualified bidders. Tender Documents (Technical & Financial) are to be uploaded on **https://uktenders.gov.in by 1500 hrs 17.04.2023.**

For more details, please visit **www.uktenders.gov.in** / official website **www.ucada.in** /Uttarakhand. Civil Aviation Development Authority, Doon Helidrome, Mussoorie by pass P.O-Kulhan, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248013

CEO, UCADA

**कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, वृत- भरतपुर**
क्रमांक- 4254 दिनांक 29.03.2023
**निविदा सूचना संख्या: 08/ 2022-23**

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से जिला भरतपुर में बजट घोषणा वर्ष 2023-24 में एसआरएफ आर.आर. योजनान्तर्गत कुल 01 पैकेज निर्माण (दोष निवारण अवधि 5 वर्ष सहित) के लिए उपयुक्त श्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार/ केन्द्रीय सरकार के अधिकृत संगठनों/ केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग /डाक एवं दूर संचार विभाग/ रेलवे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के विभिन्न सक्षम श्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्यूरमेंट प्रक्रिया हेतु ऑन लाईन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

निविदा से संबंधित समस्त विवरण वेबसाईट **"www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in"** एवं **"www.sppp.raj.nic.in"** पर देखा जा सकता हैं । इच्छुक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेबसाईट **"www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in"** पर रजिस्टर करवाना आवश्यक हैं।

**NIB No. PWD2223A5017 & UBN No. PWD2223WSRC20387**

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
सा.नि.वि. वृत- भरतपुर

DIPR/C/5129/2023

E-mail :- acezoneii@yahoo.com/acejaipur2.pwd-rj
**Additional Chief Engineer P.W.D. Zone-II, Jaipur**
PWD Campus, Jacob Road, Jaipur
Phone :- 0141-2226537 Ex.:-299

File No- 2902 Date- 27/3/23

**NIB NO-40/2022-23**

Bids for 08 no. Road Works in Jaipur/Alwar District are invited from interested bidders upto 6-00 PM on 20-04-2023. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal **(http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in)** of the state; and **http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in**. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 22360.21 lacs.

**UBN:**

| S. No. | UBN No. | S. No. | UBN No. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | PWD2223WLOB20300 | 5 | PWD2223WLOB20372 |
| 2 | PWD2223WLOB20343 | 6 | PWD2223WLOB20073 |
| 3 | PWD2223WLOB20346 | 7 | PWD2223WLOB20422 |
| 4 | PWD2223WSOB20350 | 8 | PWD2223WLOB20388 |

Addl. Chief Engineer
PWD Zone-II, Jaipur

DIPR/C/5109

**कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, संभाग द्वितीय जोधपुर**
(मुख्यालय बाड़मेर)
क्रमांक:- 4356-77 दिनांक:- 30.03.2023
अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना संख्या : 13 वर्ष 2022-2023
**NIB No. PWD2223A5035**

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से **प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना के अन्तर्गत सड़कों के चौड़ाईकरण एवं सुदृढीकरण कार्य** के निम्नलिखित कार्यों मय पांच साल की मरम्मत के लिए 01 पैकेज हेतु उपयुक्त श्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार/ केन्द्र सरकार के अधिकृत संगठनों/केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग/ डाक एवं दूर संचार विभाग/ रेल्वे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के उपयुक्त श्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्यूमेन्ट प्रक्रिया से ऑन लाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण वेबसाईट http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in व http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in व http://pmgsytendersraj.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। पैकेजवाईज यू.बी.एन. संख्या निम्नानुसार है।

1. PWD2223WLOB20446 इच्छुक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेब साईट http://pmgsytendersraj.gov.in पर रजिस्टर्ड होना आवश्यक है।

(विजय कुमार वर्मा) अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता,
सा.नि.वि. संभाग द्वितीय, जोधपुर
(मुख्यालय- बाड़मेर)

DIPR/C/5134/23

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PWD CIRCLE BARMER**
No. SE/BMR/2022-23/2952 Date: 24.03.2023

**NOTICE INVITING BID**
**Short Time NIT No. 12 Year 2022-23**

Bids for **Rate Contract of Road Works are invited from interested bidders 06.00 PM of 30.03.2023 to 03.05.2023** upto. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, and http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the state. The approximate value of the procurement is **Rs. 2008.32** Lacs.

**UBN No. As under**

1. PWD2223WSRC19881 2. PWD2223WSRC19884 3. PWD2223WSRC19888
4. PWD2223WSRC19890 5. PWD2223WSRC19892 6. PWD2223WSRC19894

(Sanjiv Jain)
Superintending Engineer
PWD Circle Barmer

DIPR/C/5098

**Office of the Superintending Engineer, PWD, Circle, Ajmer**
No.:-SE/AJ/TECH/D-5038 Date:-29.03.2023

**NIB No.:-PWD2223A5047**
**Notice Inviting Bid No. 17/2022-23**

Bids for 07 No. Packages are invited from interested bidders upto 6.00 PM on Monday 17th April, 2023. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.raj.nic.in) of the State; and DIPR department website. The appoximate value of the procurement is Rs. 1718.04 Lacs.

S.No. 1-UBN No.:- PWD2223WSOB20466 S.No. 2-UBN No.:- PWD2223WSOB20467
S.No. 3-UBN No.:- PWD2223WSOB20468 S.No. 4-UBN No.:- PWD2223WSOB20469
S.No.5-UBN No.:- PWD2223WSOB20470 S.No. 6-UBN No.:- PWD2223WSOB20471
S.No. 7-UBN No.:- PWD2223WSOB20472

(Ashok Kumar Tanwar),
Superintending Engineer,
PWD, Circle, Ajmer.

DIPR/C/5259

**Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMC)**
In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar-751 001
Tel.:(0674) 2380608; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in, Email: proc.osmcl.od@nic.in
*Assuring Quality, Saving Lives*

Notification No. 2438 /OSMCL/2023 Date : 10.04.2023

**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF SURGICAL STAPLER FOR AHPGIC-CUTTACK**

**Online Bids** through **e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in)** are invited from eligible bidders for Supply of Surgical Stapler as per the particulars mentioned below :

| Sl. | Bid Reference No. | Item Name | Bid Document Cost inclusive of GST (Rs.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | OSMCL/2022-23/ Surgical Stapler Retender_AHPGIC/19 | Re-tender for Supply of Surgical Stapler for AHPGIC-Cuttack | 5,900/- |

| Sl. No. | Particulars | Date and time | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Date & time of release of bid | 10/04/2023, 5 PM | |
| 2. | Date & time of **Pre-bid** Meeting | 15/04/2023, 11.30 AM Venue : Tender Hall, Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd., In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar | |
| 3. | Date & time of Online bid submission | Start Date & Time | End Date & Time |
| | | 19/04/2023, 3 PM | 09/05/2023, 5 PM |
| 4. | Date & time of online Technical Bid Opening | 12/05/2023, 3 PM | |
| 5. | Date of opening of Price Bid | To be informed to the qualified bidders | |

The bid document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of bid document, EMD, Prequalification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: **www.osmcl.nic.in** and **https://tendersodisha.gov.in** . The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Managing Director, OSMCL

CAD-129 : OIPR-10112/11/0002/2324

## INBRIEF

### Serum Institute restarts Covishield production

Serum Institute of India (SII) CEO Adar Poonawalla said on Wednesday that the company has restarted manufacturing of the COVID-19 vaccine Covishield, amid a rising numbers of cases of the viral infection. Reacting to reports of COVID-19 vaccines shortage, he said manufacturers are ready with stock but there has been no demand. "Just as a precaution, we have done it [restart of manufacturing] so that people have Covishield as a choice if they want it," Mr. Poonawalla said. He said the company already has six million booster doses of Covovax vaccine available and urged adults to take the booster shot. The company stopped manufacturing of Covishield in December 2021. PTI

### Varun Gandhi seeks reunion of Sarus crane with friend Arif

BJP Lok Sabha member Varun Gandhi on Wednesday called for the reunion of a rescued Sarus crane with its protector and friend, Arif Khan. Recently, a video clip of Mr. Khan visiting the Sarus crane at the Kanpur bird sanctuary surfaced on social media. In the viral video, the bird is seen jumping in excitement and spreading its wings at the sight of Mr. Khan. "The story of Saras and Arif is special! The happiness of these two friends on seeing each other shows how pure their love is. This beautiful creature is made to fly in the free sky, not to live in a cage. Give him back his sky, his freedom and his friend," wrote Mr. Gandhi in Hindi on Twitter.

### Court grants interim relief to Marathi rapper Mungase

A court in Maharashtra on Wednesday granted interim protection from arrest to Rajesh Mungase, a Marathi rapper booked for singing a song allegedly defaming State Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. Sessions judge R.G. Waghmare said that Mr. Mungase should not be arrested till April 25 and also directed the Maharashtra Police to file its reply to his anticipatory bail application, filed on April 11. On March 25, Mr. Mungase had uploaded a 1.08-minute-long song titled '*chor*' on YouTube. While it does name any political leader, it allegedly refers to those who broke away from Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena.

### SC initiates steps for inclusive infrastructure for LGBTQIA+

The Supreme Court has initiated steps towards inclusive infrastructure and sexuality sensitisation for the welfare of the LGBTQIA+ community. A statement said the court under the guidance of Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud had taken the lead for the inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community to create nine universal restrooms at different locations in the main building as well as the additional building complex of the Supreme Court. It said the online appearance portal had also been made gender neutral. Senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy had been inducted as a member of Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee (GSICC).

# Azad reference omitted in NCERT textbook

**When the NCERT published a list of deletions being incorporated in the rationalised content, it had declared that 'no changes' had been made in this particular book, a political science text for Class 11 students; paragraph on Jammu and Kashmir's conditional accession has also been deleted**

**Maitri Porecha**
NEW DELHI

He was a freedom fighter and India's first Education Minister, but any mention of Maulana Azad has been deleted from a revised political science textbook published by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The authors of the revised Class 11 textbook have also deleted the fact that Jammu and Kashmir had acceded to India on the basis of a promise that the State would remain autonomous.

These are the latest in a spate of controversial deletions from new NCERT textbooks as part of the process of rationalising the syllabus. More glaring is the fact that the NCERT failed to declare either of these revisions in the public domain.

Azad's reference appeared in the old Class 11 NCERT political science textbook, *Indian Constitution at Work*, in the first chapter, which is titled "Constitution – Why and How?" Last year, when the NCERT published a list of deletions in a list of rationalised content, it had declared that 'no changes' had been made in this particular textbook.

**Name dropped**

In the older version of the textbook, a paragraph in the first chapter read, "The Constituent Assembly had eight major Committees on different subjects. Usually, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad or Ambedkar chaired these Committees. These were not men who agreed with each other on many things. Ambedkar had been a bitter critic of the Congress and Gandhi, accusing them of not doing enough for the upliftment of Scheduled Castes. Patel and Nehru disagreed on many issues. Nevertheless, they all worked together."

**Missing pieces:** The NCERT has been caught in a controversy over deletions in various textbooks. R.V. MOORTHY

On mapping the changes between the old and the revised version of the textbook, *The Hindu* found that Azad's name had been dropped from the new version, with the relevant sentence now saying, "Usually, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Patel or B.R. Ambedkar chaired these Committees."

Azad, however, had played a key role in 1946, when he led the Congress in the elections for the new Constituent Assembly of India, which would draft India's Constitution. He had also headed the delegation to negotiate with the British Cabinet Mission, in his sixth year as Congress president.

This is not the first time that references to Azad have been expunged from the current political narrative, says historian and author S. Irfan Habib, whose biography *Maulana Azad: A Life* was released earlier this year.

**Fellowship closed**

"Last year, the Ministry of Minority Affairs chose to discontinue the Maulana Azad Fellowship, which was launched in 2009 and provided financial assistance for five years to students from six notified minorities – Buddhists, Christians, Jains, Muslims, Parsis and Sikhs – to pursue M.Phil and Ph.D.," Professor Habib told *The Hindu*.

What makes the deletion more glaring, he adds, is that Azad was the first Education Minister of Independent India and had a leading role to play in advocating for key reforms such as free and compulsory primary education for all children up to 14 years.

Azad was also a key founding member of the Jamia Millia Islamia, various Indian Institutes of Technology, the Indian Institute of Science, and the School of Planning and Architecture.

In the 10th chapter of the same textbook, titled "The philosophy of the Constitution", the reference to Jammu and Kashmir's conditional accession has also been deleted. The dropped paragraph had said, "For example, the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to the Indian Union was based on a commitment to safeguard its autonomy under Article 370 of the Constitution."

## Govt. revises package rates for CGHS beneficiaries

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

The Health Ministry on Wednesday announced that it has revised the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) package rates for all CGHS beneficiaries and simplified the referral process under CGHS for the benefit of its employees by offering a video call facility. There has not been a revision in the rates since 2014.

A senior Health Ministry official said that the increase in rates associated with the CGHS follows the demand for it from various stakeholders. The decision will increase the burden on the Central government's exchequer from between ₹240 crore to ₹300 crore.

The Central government has increased the CGHS rates of consultation fee for out-patient department (OPD)/in-patient department (IPD) to ₹350 from ₹150.

Similarly, ICU charges have been revised to ₹5,400 (₹862 plus ₹4,500 for private wards, rounded to ₹5,400), including accommodation for all ward entitlements.

There are about 44 lakh CGHS beneficiaries.

## 'Credit system will integrate general and vocational education'

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

University Grants Commission Chairman M. Jagadesh Kumar said the recently released National Credit Framework (NCrF) would function as a broad enabling framework for all regulatory organisations and universities, including institutions of national importance.

He said institutions would be free to notify their detailed implementation guidelines with flexibility for catering to their academic requirements.

"It is a meta-framework to seamlessly integrate the credits earned through school education, higher education, and vocational and skill education," Mr. Kumar said.

He said the National Education Policy (NEP) put emphasis on the integration of general academic education and vocational and skill education, which would provide seamless horizontal and vertical mobility between the two streams for lifelong learning.

Under the system, one credit corresponds to 30 notional learning hours in a year of two semesters. "Every semester, a student is required to earn a minimum of 20 credits. A student earns 40 credits in one year corresponding to 1,200 notional learning hours. But students can also earn more than 40 credits in a year," he added.

Jagadesh Kumar

The credits earned by a student during the entire schooling period will be 160 credits. Higher education levels start from Level 4.5 and end at Level 8. A three-year degree will have levels 4.5, 5, and 5.5 corresponding to the first year, second year, and third year.

Every year, a student has to earn 40 credits to move to the next level, and by the end of a three-year Bachelor's degree course, the student will have earned 120 credits.

## Social media rules quite strict in India, says Musk

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

Twitter owner Elon Musk told the BBC on Tuesday morning that he would rather comply with the Indian government's blocking orders than risk sending Twitter employees to jail. Mr. Musk made the remarks in a Twitter Spaces interview.

Asked about the blocking of the BBC's two-part documentary series *India: The Modi Question*, Mr. Musk said, "I don't know about that, you know, what exactly happened with some content situation in India."

He added, "The rules in India for what can appear on social media are quite strict, and we can't go beyond the laws of a country."

Mr. Musk is restating a view his lawyers had outlined in court filings during a challenge of his attempt to pull out of acquiring Twitter in 2022. In those court documents, he had called a challenge against some blocking orders by the Union government in the Karnataka High Court "risky". However, Twitter continues to fight the case in the court.

## U.S. aviation watchdog retains India's safety category after review

**The Hindu Bureau**
NEW DELHI

**The IASA programme focuses personnel licensing, operation of aircraft and airworthiness of aircraft**

The aviation safety regulator of the U.S., the Federal Aviation Administration, has retained the "Category 1" status for India's aviation safety oversight following a review, the agency informed the country's watchdog on Wednesday.

The International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) programme of the FAA determines whether a country's oversight of its airlines that operate or wish to operate to the U.S. or enter into codeshare partnerships with U.S. carriers comply with safety standards established by the UN aviation watchdog, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

"The FAA has informed the DGCA [Directorate General of Civil Aviation] that India meets the international standards for aviation safety oversight of the Chicago Convention and its Annexes and continues to retain FAA IASA Category 1 status which was last assessed in July 2018," the Indian regulator said in a statement. It also added that the FAA has stated that the DGCA has "demonstrated a commitment towards ensuring an effective safety oversight of India's aviation system and appreciated the positive manner in which DGCA has worked with them".

"The assessment by the ICAO as well as the FAA is a testimony to India's commitment of having an effective safety oversight for its civil aviation system," the DGCA statement said.

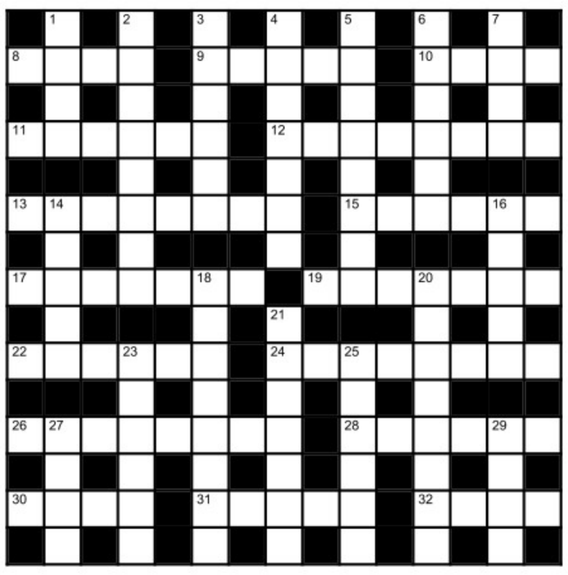
The IASA programme focuses on three broad areas, which include personnel licensing, operation of aircraft and airworthiness of aircraft. The FAA conducted the programme over a one-year period which included physical audits from October 25 to October 29, 2021 and a review in July and September, 2022. In the recent ICAO audit in November last year, India scored an Effective Implementation (EI) of 85.65% from the previous EI of 69.95%.

## TH CROSSWORD + 13838

(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



**Across**

**8** "Sign record, Oscar" (4)
**9** Authority to cook soya after commencement of summer (3-2)
**10** Send out wrong time (4)
**11** Extraordinary cost, including one million for comedy show on television, for example (6)
**12** Entered "I own tent" wrongly (4,4)
**13** Scamp goes around and does better (8)
**15** Immediately, champ collected hundred (2,4)
**17** Show type of American visa in place of egress (7)
**19** More even praise (7)
**22** Pressing university rector and man (6)
**24** Man clues wrongly for personification of America (5,3)
**26** Laconic team leader adjusts curtain (8)
**28** Advertisement in European capital for waterproof enclosure for antenna (6)
**30** Sink one's teeth into bits of bread in the evening (4)
**31** Remove masks from mess jacket, crumple and throw out (5)
**32** River having zero evaporation at first? (4)

**Down**

**1** Irritated patriot throwing out tar's hat (4)
**2** To some extent, deacon certifies solo musical compositions (8)
**3** Author Mao is worried on 3rd of November (6)
**4** Treatment for cleaning optical organ? Nonsense! (7)
**5** Draw everyone behind New Hampshire's community building (4,4)
**6** Wrongly tax income without TAN in country (6)
**7** Present digital file format before time (4)
**14** Around 9, setter gets right kitchen appliance (5)
**16** Revolutionary Los Angeles pincer (5)
**18** Nut rides haphazardly and barges in (8)
**20** Gradient is designed for travelling on foot (8)
**21** Country has no jailer (7)
**23** Amended text, formulating diet by volume (6)
**25** Container containing union leader and churchman (6)
**27** In the middle of logjam, I dither to some extent (4)
**29** I'm back with large cocktail and baby food! (4)

## SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | | 4 | | 1 | | | | |
| | 9 | | 2 | 4 | 8 | | 7 | |
| 2 | | | | 5 | | 6 | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | 8 | 9 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 8 | | | | | | | 7 |
| | | 7 | | 2 | | | | 3 |
| | 6 | | 1 | 8 | 9 | | 2 | |
| | | | | 7 | | 5 | | 1 |

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

No.SS5767 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

**Solution to previous puzzle**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | C | U | R | R | E | N | T | B | I | L | L | | |
| H | | H | O | | N | | R | | N | | O | | H | |
| A | G | O | N | Y | | A | B | U | N | D | A | N | C | E |
| R | | I | | A | | B | | A | | Y | | D | | R |
| E | R | R | O | L | F | L | Y | N | N | | S | O | A | P |
| E | | | | T | | E | | T | | | | N | | E |
| M | A | S | A | I | | | P | S | A | L | T | E | R | S |
| | | A | | E | | | | | E | | R | | | |
| R | O | C | K | S | A | L | T | | | T | A | S | T | Y |
| H | | C | | | | E | | U | | H | | | | E |
| O | A | H | U | | E | N | T | R | E | A | T | I | E | S |
| M | | A | | T | | T | | A | | R | | N | | M |
| B | A | R | B | A | R | I | A | N | | G | A | F | F | E |
| I | | I | | L | | G | | I | | I | | E | | N |
| | | N | E | C | R | O | M | A | N | C | E | R | | |

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 6 |
| 3 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 4 |
| 7 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| 9 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 3 |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 8 |
| 6 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 2 |
| 5 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 1 |
| 1 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 9 |
| 2 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 7 |

## FAITH

### Mercy, the prime quality

People may be struggling hard in their life due to the cascading effects of karma. It is said that God is also struggling equally like us as how to help us due to His unique quality of mercy. Lord is Sarvagnan – the knower of all the things. His quality of Sarvagna is detrimental to us. He knows what type of deeds we indulge in. He also knows that we keep some thing in our mind and heart but speak something else like a hypocrite. He is all powerful and has all capabilities (Sarva Sakthan).

For our misdeeds, if He decided a new hell may be created by Him and we may be pushed into it. But His divine mercy prevents Him. His mercy is the medium of salvation. Lakshmana says He is a servant of Lord Rama not as a brother but attracted by His qualities (Gunair Daasyam Upagatha); Sri Andal says in Nachiar Thirumozhi that she is attracted by the divine qualities of the Lord (Govindan Gunam Paadi). The apostle Nammazhwar praises the merciful qualities of the Lord.

Sri Vedantha Desika, considered to be the manifestation of Lord Srinivasa, has praised the mercy of the Lord in about 100 slokas in 'Daya Sathakam'. It tells about Saranagathi. The Acharya says Lord Srinivasa is like sugarcane. His mercy is like sugarcane juice and the Thiruvenkatamalai is like sugar candy.

Like a farmer reaping a rich harvest, He garners us to extend Moksha. With one hand He shows His divine feet to us and with the other He is ready to embrace us. Without the quality of mercy, all His other qualities (Jnana, Sakthi, Bala, Iswarya, Veerya and Tejas) will not excel, said Navalpakkam Vasudevachariar in a discourse.

KYIV

## Ukraine's Zelensky blasts Russian 'beasts' over beheading video

AFP

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday denounced Russian "beasts" after a video appeared to show the beheading of a Ukrainian prisoner, prompting international outrage. The emergence of the disturbing footage sparked fury in Ukraine, with Kyiv saying Russia is "worse than ISIS". AFP

TEHRAN

## Iran delegation arrives in Riyadh to prepare for embassy reopening

AP

An Iranian delegation arrived in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday to prepare for the reopening of Tehran's Embassy there, Iran's Foreign Ministry said. "The delegation will take the necessary measures in Riyadh and Jeddah to set up the embassy and consulate-general," Foreign Ministry spokesman, Nasser Kanaani, said. REUTERS

JERUSALEM

## Jerusalem church slams Israel's 'heavy-handed' Easter curbs

AFP

The Greek Orthodox Church on Wednesday slammed Israel's "heavy-handed restrictions" on its Easter celebrations in Jerusalem, urging Christians to attend in spite of police curbs. "We are not able to coordinate with the Israeli authorities as they are enforcing unreasonable restrictions," said Father Mattheos Siopis. AFP

SAN FRANCISCO

## Elon Musk says 'many mistakes' made since takeover of Twitter

REUTERS

Elon Musk said running Twitter has been "quite a rollercoaster" and acknowledged "many mistakes" along the way. He said he would change the designation on the BBC's Twitter handle after it objected. "We want it as truthful and accurate as possible — we're adjusting the label to 'publicly funded'," Mr. Musk said. AFP

# Strengthen training for actual combat, Xi tells PLA

Military must resolutely defend China's territorial sovereignty and maritime interests, and strive to protect overall peripheral stability, says President, a day after concluding drills around Taiwan

**Agence France-Presse**
BEIJING

China's President Xi Jinping called on the country's armed forces to "strengthen military training oriented towards actual combat", state media reported on Wednesday, after Beijing conducted military drills intended to intimidate Taiwan.

Mr. Xi's comments, made on a naval inspection trip on Tuesday, come amid heightened tension in the region after the show of force by Beijing, which sees self-ruled Taiwan as its territory.

China on Monday concluded three days of military drills launched in response to a visit last week by Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen to the U.S., where she met a bipartisan group of lawmakers and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

**Tense situation:** Taiwan says it continues to detect Chinese warships and aircraft even after exercises officially concluded. AP

Mr. Xi on Tuesday told the People's Liberation Army's Southern Theatre Command Navy that the military must "resolutely defend China's territorial sovereignty and maritime interests, and strive to protect overall peripheral stability", state broadcaster CCTV reported.

Beijing has also criticised a plan for U.S. forces to use a growing number of bases in the Philippines, including one near Taiwan.

The U.S. and the Philippines are holding their largest-ever joint military drills this week, with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken committing to "standing with the Philippines against any intimidation or coercion, including in the South China Sea".

Mr. Xi added that China must be "innovative in its concepts and methods of combat". China and Taiwan split following a civil war in 1949. Beijing views the island as part of its territory and has vowed to take it one day, stepping up its rhetoric and military activity around the island.

The PLA simulated targeted strikes and a blockade of Taiwan during its recent three-day "Joint Sword" exercise.

Taiwan's Defence Ministry said it continued to detect Chinese warships and aircraft around the island even after drills officially concluded. Beijing warned this week that Taiwanese independence and cross-strait peace were "mutually exclusive", blaming Taipei and unnamed "foreign forces" supporting it for the tensions.

## China sets up no-fly zone near Taiwan, says Taipei

**Agence France-Presse**
TAIPEI

China will set up a brief no-fly zone north of Taiwan on Sunday due to what the island's Transport Ministry described as "space activities". The closure comes after Beijing completed three days of massive war games around self-ruled Taiwan last week, during which China simulated targeted strikes and practised a blockade of the island.

The no-fly zone does not appear to be linked to the drills, with Taiwan's Ministry saying on Wednesday China had imposed the restriction "on the convergence areas of many international routes" on the grounds of "space activities". The restrictions will be in place from 9:30 a.m. to 9:57 a.m. local time.

# Myanmar Opposition calls for action against junta

**Kallol Bhattacherjee**
NEW DELHI

The international community should act against the military junta of Myanmar in the backdrop of the latest airstrike in the country's Sagaing province that killed dozens of civilians, including women and children, Myanmar's Opposition leaders have said.

In a statement sent to *The Hindu*, the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), consisting of the opposition parties and ethnic groups opposed to the junta, which took power through a coup in 2021, said the military rulers are committing war crimes.

"The military junta's fighter jet from Tada-U Airport bombed over the civilian population in Pazigyi village in Kanbalu township in Sagaing region at 7.45 am on 11 April 2023,

Dozens of villagers killed in Sagaing region, Myanmar, after air strike by military. AP

followed by two rocket and machine gun attacks from a MI35 from North-Western Command five minutes later. The combined attack killed about 60 civilians, including children, women and elders, injuring many others," said the NUCC.

**More strikes**

A source from the NUCC said they fear more airstrikes by the military against civilians in Chin, Kachin and Sagaing regions. Tuesday's attack came a day after Falam township in Chin state was targeted in which nine civilians, including three women, were killed.

Vast areas within Myanmar are under the control of the Ethnic Resistance Organisations. The junta is also facing pushback from the People's Defence Forces and the Local Defence Forces in the areas that are not under its control.

"We are committed to bringing about justice for the innocent people killed in these attacks and to build federal democratic union which is the aspiration of the people of all national races. We call on the international community to take effective actions against the military junta who are committing such heinous crimes," said the NUCC.

## Biden asks N. Ireland parties to restore power-sharing deal

**Agence France-Presse**
BELFAST

U.S. President Joe Biden urged political compromise in Northern Ireland on Wednesday, using a visit to Belfast to promote the benefits of enduring peace and investment, but faced heated criticism from pro-U.K. hardliners.

"I hope the (Northern Ireland) Executive and Assembly will soon be restored," Mr. Biden said in a speech at Ulster University.

He touted the "unlimited possibilities" for investment and growth offered in the U.K.-ruled territory, 25 years on from a historic peace deal brokered by the U.S. government.

But senior figures in the pro-U.K. Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), which

Joe Biden

is under pressure to resume local power-sharing, were strikingly undiplomatic about the President.

Sammy Wilson, a DUP member of Parliament in Westminster, branded Mr. Biden "anti-British", accusing U.S.'s second Catholic President of having "made his antipathy towards Protestants very well known". DUP lawmaker Nigel Dodds said any mediation efforts would prove futile.

## Taliban say there is no obstacle for UN work in Afghanistan

**Associated Press**
ISLAMABAD

The Taliban's chief spokesman said on Wednesday there are no obstacles for the UN to function in Afghanistan, after they barred Afghan women from working at the global body. Last week, the country's Taliban rulers took a step further in the restrictive measures they have imposed on women and said that women Afghan staffers employed with the UN mission can no longer report for work.

The UN says it cannot accept the decision, calling it unlawful and an unparalleled violation of women's rights. It says women are crucial for the delivery of life-saving aid to millions of Afghans, and has instructed its national staff to stay at home.

Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban's chief spokesman and part of the supreme leader's inner circle, denied authorities were to blame for Afghanistan's many crises. The decision to bar Afghan women from working at the UN was an internal matter and should be respected by all sides, Mujahid said, as he set out the Taliban's position and demands to the international community.

"This decision does not mean there is discrimination here, or that the activities of the United Nations are blocked. On the contrary, we are committed to all the rights of all our countrymen, taking into account their religious and cultural interests," he said.

## Macron wants status quo on Taiwan, insists France won't be a U.S. 'vassal'

**Agence France-Presse**
AMSTERDAM

French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday stood by his controversial comments on Taiwan, saying that being a U.S. ally did not mean being a "vassal". Mr. Macron – wrapping up a state visit to the Netherlands during which he has also faced protests over pension reforms – said France still backed the "status quo" on Taiwan.

But the French President appeared to stick by remarks in an interview at the weekend, in which he said Europe should not be a "follower" of either Washington or Beijing or get caught up in any escalation. "Being an ally does not mean being a vassal... doesn't mean that we don't have the right to think for ourselves," Mr. Macron told a press conference in Amsterdam with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte.

Mr. Macron, who visited China last week, said that French and European policy on Taiwan "has not changed" despite the furore over his remarks in an interview with Politico and Les Echos in which he backed Europe's strategic autonomy.

"France is for the status quo in Taiwan," he said, adding that Paris "supports the One China policy and the search for a peaceful resolution to the situation." Mr. Macron's weekend interview drew praise as "brilliant" in China – which rejects U.S. support of what it sees as a breakaway province -- but raised eyebrows among Western allies.

The pomp of the first state visit to the Netherlands by a French President in 23 years has not stopped Mr. Macron from facing pressure on a series of both domestic and foreign issues.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Our client, **MR. ARUN RAMABHADRA**, son of Late Venkatesa Ramabhadra is the owner of the Site No. 40, Block No. IV, Jayanagar Extension, Bangalore, presently within the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, BBMP Old Ward No.60, New Ward No.168, bearing New Municipal No.64 [Old No.40], 7th B Main Road, 4th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore, having PID No.60-159-64 and measuring East to West: 55 [fifty five] Feet and 9 [ nine] inches and North to South: 40 [forty] feet, together with a house built thereon measuring 2800 square feet, which is morefully described in Schedule Property mentioned hereinbelow and hereinafter referred to as "***Schedule Property***". Our client has lost the Deed of Partition registered as Document No.2236/1984-85 of Book I, Volume 872, Pages 5 to 10, dated 01/09/1984 in the Office of Sub Registrar, Jayanagar, Bangalore in respect of the Schedule Property.

If any person has found or is in possession of the aforementioned document, kindly return the same to the undersigned.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTY**

All that piece and parcel of residential property bearing Site No. 40, Block No. IV, Jayanagar Extension, Bangalore, presently within the jurisdiction of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, BBMP Old Ward No.60, New Ward No.168, bearing New Municipal No.64 [Old No.40], 7th B Main Road, 4th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore, having PID No.60-159-64 and measuring East to West: 55 [fifty five] Feet and 9 [ nine] inches and North to South: 40 [forty] feet, together with a house built thereon measuring 2800 square feet and bounded on the:

East : 7th B Main Road,
West : Site No. 17,
North : Site No.41,
South : Site No. 39.

Place: Bangalore
Date: 12.04.2023

**Issued by:**
**M/S AGRAA LEGAL**
2nd floor, No. 19, Shivashankara plaza, Lalbagh road, Richmond circle, Bangalore - 560 027.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My client Mr.CHANNAPPA S/o Sri.Narasimhaiah, and Mrs.ASHWINI.H.B W/o Sri.Channappa, both are Residing at No.3481, 1st Main Road, Gayathrinagar C Block, Sriramapura, Bangalore-21, proposes to purchase the following property from **Mr.H.D.SHANTHI PRASAD S/o Late.H.A.Devandra Kumar,** aged about 50 years, residing at No. 1688/7, New No. 17, 1st Cross, 3rd Main Road, Ramamohanpura, Bangalore-560 021.

Any person/s and Financial Institutions having any right, title, interest claims objections for the above said transaction any lodge his/their claims/objections with documentary evidence within 15 days from the date of publication of this which with the undersigned, failing which, thereafter any client shall proceed to complete the transaction and any claim/s or objection/s received thereafter will not be entertained.

**SCHEDULE**

All that piece and parcel of the Residential Property bearing Corporation/Municipal New No.7, i.e., No. 1688/7, BBMP P.I.D.No.8-25-7, Old Nos.7 and 7/1, Still Old No. 1688, (Old Nos.26 and 27) Old Ward No. 10, Bangalore City., Situated at 2nd Cross, RAMAMOHANAPURA, B.M.P Ward No.8, Bengalure-560 021, Now BBMP Ward No.76, Presently RAMAMOHANPURA, 3rd MAIN, measuring East to West: 48 Feet and North to South : 40 Feet, in all measuring 1920 Square Feet, along with R.C.C. Residential House, and bounded on :

**East by** :: 3rd Main Road,
**West by** :: Property No. 1688/7/2 belongs to Krishnappa House,
**North by** :: Cross Road,
**South by** :: Property No. 1685 belongs to A.G.Anantha Padmanabha Rao's House.

Sd/-. **S.R.GANGADHAR,** Advocate
**Mathrushree Associates** No.V-5, Shop No.2, Opp KIADB Building Near Peenya Sub-Registrar Office, 14lh Cross, Peenya 2nd Stage, Bangalore-58. **Mob. 9448522933**
Date:13.04.2023, Place: Bangalore.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This notice is issued on behalf of My client **Smt.Umavathi W/o Sri.A.Shekar** to bring the notice of the general public that the **original absolute sale deed bearing doc No.5063/1981-82 of Book-I, in Volum-3522, Pages 224-231, Date.07.12.1981, executed by Sri.Appayanna and others in favour of Sri.A.Shekar s/o J.Arokiyanathan** is missing / lost/ misplaced in respect of schedule property.

If any person/s, firm, company, institution or organization has any claim are holding the afore mentioned document, they may contact the undersigned in writing within **7 days** from the date of this notice failing which it will be presumed that there are no claims.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTY**

All the piece and parcel of the residential immovable House premises bearing **Khanesumari No.15 in Lingarajapuram Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk,** now comes under the Limits of BBMP, Bangalore, measuring East to West 40 feet and North to South 38 feet on Eastern Side and 34 feet on Western Side and bounded by:

**East by : Road, West by : Khanesumari No.16, North by : Khanesumari No.14, South by : Channel and Survey No.49.**

**H. Prahlada,** Advocate & Solicitor,
**For H.P.Law,** #2, 3rd Floor, Venkateshwara Complex, Yeshwanthpur, Bangalore-560022
M : 7760061073

**OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**

**DEATH**

**SAD DEMISE**

18-8-1936 11-4-2023

**CHOODAMANI PADMANABHAN**

Mother of Naren, Nandini & Nicky

You greeted us with laughter, and left us with a smile.

Deeply mourned and missed beyond measure by

**Family and Friends**

**Ph: 93821 04565**

**DEATH ANNIVERSARIES**

**5th ANNIVERSARY**
**on 13-04-2023**

ஒழுக்கம், பக்தி இருகண்கள் என்று 82 ஆண்டுகள் புவியில் வாழ்ந்தாய் ஐம்பத்தாறு ஆண்டுகள் என் வாழ்க்கைத் துணை நலமாக இருந்து என் உயிரில் கலந்தாய்

**Mrs.O.R. NIRMALA, B.A.,**
**(Retd.) Controller, Office of the J.C.C. Of Imports & Exports, Chennai**
10.04.1936 13.04.2018
Fondly Remembered by
**Husband: V.RAJAMANOHARAN, M.A.**
(Retd) Deputy Director (I & PR), Chennai-9)
Son: V.R. Murugavel, B.E.
Daughter: S.Thamizh Selvi, B.Sc
Daughter-in-law: Sharmila (M.R.Sc)
Son-in-law: M.Sundar Rajan, M (Tech)
Grand Children: Selvi. M.Prarthana, M.Vijaya Prathan, S.Sai Krishna
**Mobile: 94449 51564**

**IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES**

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
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**PERSONAL**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, SHRUTI,** D/o N C Mishra, R/at : Flat No. 205, RHBL, Shree Krishna Residency, Bagalur Main Road, Behind More Super Market, Kattigenahalli, Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560063, have changed my name from Shruti to Shruti Mishra vide affidavit dated 12-04-2023 before Notary H. Sridhar Rao, Bangalore.

**THANKSGIVING**

**THANKSGIVING**

Thank you Infant Jesus, for your kind love and blessings showered on my daughter and grand daughter during her delivery time. Please bless and protect my daughter, son in law and grand daughter Thara always.
**- Ramadevi Venkataraman**

**REAL ESTATE**

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**PERSONAL**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, ANUBHA** Kumari, W/O.Arunesh Kumar Sharma, R/O.No 302, A Blk Hrc Ibbani Apt, Arkavathi Lyt, Opp Vibgyor School,Jakkur, Blr–64, have changed name to Anubha Sharma vide afdvt dtd 28/02/23

**I, KARTHIK** T S/o Thangavel N, R/o No.3, Ground Floor, Varshini Enclave, 4th Cross, Keb Office Road, BSK 3rd Stage, Bengaluru–560085 Have Changed My Religion From Hindu Religion to Islam Religion Wef. 29/11/2019 Also Changed My Name to Khalid Ahmed.

**I, RADHIKA** Vijay W/o Vijay Chander Srinivasan, R/o # 288, 6th Cross, Near KFC, Indiranagar 1st Stage, Bengaluru-560008 have changed my name from Radhika Vijay to Radhika Vijay Chander vide affidavit dt: 11-03-2023 before Notary A.R.Muneer Ahmed, B'luru.

**I, SAKSHI,** D/o N C Mishra, R/at : Flat No.205, RHBL, Shree Krishna Residency, Bagalur Main Road, Behind More Super Market, Kattigenahalli, Yelahanka, Bengaluru-560063, have changed my name fron Sakshi to Sakshi Mishra, vide affidavit dated 12-04-2023 before Notary H. Sridhar Rao, Bangalore.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My client **K. JAYANNA S/o. late Kemparangaiah** has entered in to an agreement of sale with respect to the below mentioned "Schedule property" with **SRI. S. PRAKASH S/o. Late Shankar Rao. M.** Any person/s, claiming to have any right, title, interest, benefit, claim or demand in, Loans or to the schedule property and or any part thereof, by way of sale, gift, lease, otherwise or decree/ judgment/Decree any court, agreement or otherwise however to the schedule property shall file his/her/its/their objections/claims with true copies of documentary proof in support thereof, to the under signed at the address given above within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, my client will proceed with the Sale deed.

**SCHEDULE PROPERTY**

All that piece and parcel of the residential property bearing No.50A, **New Municipal No.42,** situated at Mathikere Extension, 11th Main Road, Bengaluru, which is carved out of Sy.No.40, within the jurisdiction of Corporation Divsion-1, Bengaluru City, now comes under BBMP Ward No.36, Mathikere, **PID No.4-10-42** and bounded on:

EAST BY: Belongs to Property No.51.
WEST BY: Belongs to Property No.50.
NORTH BY: Road.
SOUTH BY: Others Property.

**MEASURING: EAST to WEST: 30-00 Feet. NORTH to SOUTH: 45-00 Feet.** Totally measuring **1350-00 Square feet** together with RCC residential house of totally 20 Squares of building thereon with all civic amenities.

**T.B. RAJASHEKARA & ASSOCIATES**
*Advocates & Tax Practitioners*
# 46/1, 2nd Floor, Brindavana Hotel Complex, 4th Cross, Sampige Road, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560003.
Mobile: 9448956574 / 9448928279
8217877556/8217880088
Date: 12-4-2023, Bangalore

## INBRIEF

### City Union Bank unveils voice biometric authentication

City Union Bank Ltd. (CUB), in association with Kaizen Secure Voiz Pvt. Ltd., has rolled out voice biometric authentication to enable access to its mobile banking application. "We are the first bank in the country to introduce voice biometric authentication for our customers," said N. Kamakodi, MD & CEO, after the roll-out. Voice biometric will be one more option for customers to login along with user ID, PIN, face ID and fingerprint authentication, he added.

### Ucal Fuel to change name to reflect product portfolio

Ucal Fuel Systems Ltd. has decided to change its name to Ucal Ltd., considering its diversified product portfolio and to keep pace with emerging technologies in the automotive sector. Retaining 'fuel systems' in the name would give an impression to customers, suppliers and other stakeholders that the firm was concentrating only on fuel systems despite having a diversified product portfolio. Therefore, it was considered relevant to change the name, as per a filing.

### MRF emerges as the 'world's second-strongest tyre brand'

MRF Ltd. has emerged as the second-strongest tyre brand in the world, according to the latest report by the U.K.-based Brand Finance, a leading brand valuation consultancy, on the most valuable and strongest tyre brands in the world. MRF scored high in almost all parameters and also featured as the second fastest-growing tyre brand in the world, the tyre firm said. It scored 83.2 out of 100 in brand strength and was awarded a AAA- brand rating, MRF said.

# IIP rises 5.6% year-on-year in February but slides from Jan.

Consumer durables shrink for third successive month, output in non-durables contracts 6% compared with January level; most sectors record lower production month-on-month

**Vikas Dhoot**
NEW DELHI

India's industrial output grew 5.6% this February, marginally higher than the 5.45% in January, with manufacturing output picking up pace to rise 5.3% even as electricity generation grew less than 10% for the first time in four months at 8.7%.

Sequentially, however, the Index of Industrial Production or IIP was 5.6% below January levels. Consumer durables production contracted for the third month in a row, to drop 4% in February while intermediate goods shrank 0.3% with output 7.2% below January levels.

The favourable base from February 2022 when consumer durables' output had slipped by almost 10%, didn't help much, and their production was also 0.4% below this January's output. Bank of Baroda chief economist Madan Sabnavis attributed this to weaker demand owing to high inflation.

On the other hand, consumer non-durables saw a 12.1% surge in output this February compared to a nearly 7% decline a year earlier. However, February marked the second month of a sequential decline in output with production 6% below January levels.

**Inching up**

India's industrial output grew 5.6% this February from a year earlier, only marginally higher than the 5.45% seen in January

- Manufacturing output picked up pace to rise 5.3%
- Electricity generation grew less than 10% for the first time in four months at 8.7%
- Intermediate goods shrank 0.3%

## U.S. consumer price gains slow; inflation pressures stay

**Reuters**
WASHINGTON

U.S. consumer prices barely rose in March as the cost of gasoline declined, but stubbornly-high rents kept underlying inflation pressures simmering, likely ensuring that the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates again next month.

The report from the Labor Department, however, had some encouraging news on rents, which increased at their slowest pace in nearly a year. Rents have been one of the main drivers of inflation in the past years. Food prices remained unchanged.

## RBI issues draft circular to regulate penal interest

**The Hindu Bureau**
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a draft circular on 'Fair lending practice, penal charges on loan accounts' to regulate penal interest levied by lenders.

"Supervisory reviews have indicated divergent practices among the regulated entities (REs) with regard to levy of penal interest leading to customer grievances and disputes."

The RBI said REs must strictly comply with the norms laid down by it.

# TCS Q4 profit rises 14.8%, firm flags uncertainty in U.S. financial market

**The Hindu Bureau**
MUMBAI

Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS) reported that its consolidated net profit for the quarter ended March 31, 2023 grew 14.8% year on year (YoY) to ₹11,393 crore. The company's revenue during the quarter increased 16.9% to ₹59,162 crore.

During the quarter, the company had a net addition of 821 employees.

For the full year, TCS reported 10% growth in net profit at ₹42,147 crore as compared to same period last year. Full-year revenue grew 17.6% to ₹2,25,458 crore. While operating margin was 24.1%, net margin was 18.7%. Growth was led by North America (15.3%), the U.K. (15%), and India (14.6%).

Rajesh Gopinathan

TCS said the results were weaker than it had expected as some of its clients in the North American banking space deferred project spending amid the U.S. financial crisis.

India's top IT exporter flagged "a lot of uncertainty" in its banking, financial services and insurance segment over the near-term in the North American market as clients rushed to conserve cash.

"The quarter has come out weaker than what we originally anticipated and primarily coming out of North America," TCS CEO Rajesh Gopinathan told the media. A meaningful recovery in North America has not materialised as expected and has worsened instead, he said.

Urmi Shah, research analyst at SAMCO Securities, said, "TCS reported a muted quarter, with a mixed bag of numbers.

"The company has not managed to sustain its margins... Growth has been subdued for the quarter with the BFSI segment reporting single-digit growth."

*(With Reuters inputs)*

## MARKETS

### MARKET WATCH

| | WEDNESDAY | % CHANGE |
|---|---|---|
| Sensex | 60,393 | 0.39 |
| US Dollar | 82.11 | 0.01 |
| Gold | 61,080 | 0.66 |
| Brent oil | 87.00 | 2.08 |

### NIFTY 50

| | PRICE | CHANGE |
|---|---|---|
| Adani Enter | 1847.25 | 44.10 |
| Adani Ports | 657.75 | 3.80 |
| Apollo Hosp | 4320.20 | 48.90 |
| Asian Paints | 2786.75 | 32.95 |
| Axis Bank | 851.05 | -2.25 |
| Bajaj Auto | 4286.00 | 108.60 |
| Bajaj Finserv | 1321.55 | -1.65 |
| Bajaj Finance | 5856.95 | 19.20 |
| Bharti Airtel | 771.10 | -3.05 |
| BPCL | 337.30 | -1.80 |
| Britannia Ind | 4271.30 | -6.05 |
| Cipla | 917.95 | 10.80 |
| Coal India | 227.70 | 4.05 |
| Divis Lab | 3212.10 | 284.75 |
| Dr Reddys Lab | 4881.00 | 117.65 |
| Eicher Motors | 3128.35 | 74.15 |
| Grasim Ind | 1717.45 | 6.35 |
| HCL Tech | 1094.50 | 7.50 |
| HDFC | 2769.25 | 27.25 |
| HDFC Bank | 1684.90 | 21.60 |
| HDFC Life | 517.05 | 3.50 |
| Hero MotoCorp | 2477.30 | 7.45 |
| Hindalco | 417.65 | 0.10 |
| Hind Unilever | 2528.95 | -18.80 |
| ICICI Bank | 890.15 | 8.25 |
| IndusInd Bank | 1074.75 | 0.55 |
| Infosys | 1428.30 | 22.15 |
| ITC | 393.55 | -2.45 |
| JSW Steel | 718.25 | 4.65 |
| Kotak Bank | 1844.05 | -2.45 |
| L&T | 2288.50 | -13.00 |
| M&M | 1207.35 | 5.65 |
| Maruti Suzuki | 8621.05 | -38.50 |
| NestleIndia | 19440.30 | -234.30 |
| NTPC | 175.80 | -2.30 |
| ONGC | 157.65 | -1.40 |
| PowerGrid Corp | 227.30 | -4.05 |
| Reliance Ind | 2346.65 | 10.30 |
| SBI Life | 1126.85 | 14.20 |
| State Bank | 528.20 | -3.90 |
| Sun Pharma | 1016.70 | 7.45 |
| TataConsumerProduct | 718.40 | 1.10 |
| Tata Motors | 465.50 | 6.80 |
| Tata Steel | 107.60 | 0.05 |
| TCS | 3241.65 | 27.85 |
| Tech Mahindra | 1109.90 | 11.65 |
| Titan | 2587.90 | 7.85 |
| UltraTech Cement | 7682.85 | -58.60 |
| UPL | 739.90 | -2.65 |
| Wipro | 372.15 | 1.90 |

### EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on April 12

| CURRENCY | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|---|---|---|
| US Dollar | 81.88 | 82.20 |
| Euro | 89.44 | 89.83 |
| British Pound | 101.59 | 102.00 |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 61.22 | 61.46 |
| Chinese Yuan | 11.90 | 11.94 |
| Swiss Franc | 90.74 | 91.10 |
| Singapore Dollar | 61.53 | 61.78 |
| Canadian Dollar | 60.78 | 61.04 |
| Malaysian Ringitt | 18.55 | 18.64 |
| Australian Dollar | 54.60 | 54.87 |

Source:Indian Bank

# IRDAI tells insurers to boost capital for expanding reach

**The Hindu Bureau**
MUMBAI

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has called upon incumbent players to augment capital while inviting new players to enter the sector, in its bid to achieve 100% insurance coverage by 2047,

"I would like to ask all of you to go to your boards and think in terms of augmenting your capital because going forward we expect the growth will be speedier than before, hence more capital needs to be pumped into the sector," IRDAI Chairman Debasish Panda said.

Debasish Panda

"The investment landscape is also being rebuilt to attract more investment through the FDI route," he said. "The limit has been enhanced to 74% from 49%. So, those companies which have a foreign partner should bring in more capital and grow even faster than they have been growing," he said.

**Efficient capital use**

He said the switching over to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) was also underway and all of this would help the industry, going forward, in efficient use of capital while aiding companies and the regulator to assess risk in real-time.

He said industry must create products that are affordable, accessible and available to the masses and urged firms to explore the rural market where 'vast potential' exists.

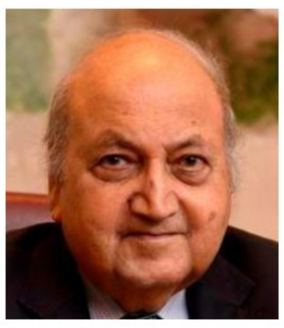
# Industrialist Keshub Mahindra dies at 99

**The Hindu Bureau**
MUMBAI

Keshub Mahindra, chairman Emeritus of Mahindra Group, passed away peacefully on Wednesday in Mumbai, the Mahindra Group said in a statement. He was 99.

He is survived by his wife Sudha Mahindra, three daughters, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Born on October 9, 1923, in Shimla, he was an alumnus of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, U.S. He joined M&M in 1947 and became chairman in 1963. Under him, the firm transformed from a steel trading company into a diversified federation of companies.


Keshub Mahindra

His nephew, Anand Mahindra, chairman, Mahindra Group, said,"Mr. Mahindra will always remain a source of inspiration for me and the entire Group."

## Aviation traffic yet to surpass pre-COVID levels: ICRA

**Jagriti Chandra**
NEW DELHI

Domestic aviation traffic in India is estimated to touch 13.6 crore for FY23, which is 60% more than the previous fiscal and marginally lower than pre-Covid levels by 4%, according to rating agency ICRA.

The total aircraft capacity deployed by airlines was also higher by 38% in financial year 2023 as compared to the previous fiscal. High ATF prices and a weak rupee will continue to remain major challenges before airlines.

# Trade body urges higher MSP for sugar

**Press Trust of India**
NEW DELHI

Sugar trade body AISTA on Wednesday demanded that the Centre should raise the minimum selling price of sugar as the sweetener is being sold at prices lower than the cost of production in the country.

The minimum selling price of sugar has remained unchanged at ₹3,100 per quintal since 2019 even though the fair and remunerative price of sugarcane has been increased every year.

The All India Sugar Trade Association (AISTA) has made a representation in this regard to Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra.

"Sugar was sold as low as ₹3,100-3,200 per quintal in Maharasthra and Karnataka during November-March , which is 10% lower than that of cost of production," AISTA chairman Praful Vithalani said.

## Sport

# 45 for Haaland, City masterclass stuns Bayern

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

**Agence France-Presse**
MANCHESTER

Erling Haaland scored his 45th goal of the season as Manchester City took a commanding 3-0 lead over Bayern Munich from their Champions League quarterfinal, first leg on Tuesday.

Rodri and Bernardo Silva were also on target for the English champion, which took a giant stride towards finally conquering Europe for the first time.

Victory was sweet for City boss Pep Guardiola as he came up against his former club for the first time since leaving Bayern for Manchester in 2016, but he warned that the job is not yet done.

**Superstar:** Haaland proved his worth yet again with an assist and a goal. REUTERS

City fought off interest from Bayern among other European giants to win the race to sign Haaland a year ago for nights like this and the Norwegian played his part in a clinical performance.

Haaland uncharacteristically fluffed his lines with the first big chance of the game when his weak shot was straight at Yann Sommer. At the other end, City was grateful to a brilliant block from Ruben Dias to prevent Jamal Musiala putting Bayern in front.

Rodri then showed the forwards how it is done as the Spaniard took aim from long range on his weaker left foot and curled a sumptuous shot into the top corner on 27 minutes.

Haaland showed there is more to his game than goals with a perfectly weighted cross for Silva to head in City's second 20 minutes from time.

Sommer then produced a fine stop low to his left to turn Julian Alvarez's shot to safety. But City was not to be denied its third and Haaland his goal as he stretched out a telescopic right leg to turn John Stones' knockdown beyond Sommer.

**The results (quarterfinals, first leg):**
Benfica 0 lost to Inter Milan 2 (Barella 51, Lukaku 82-pen).
Manchester City 3 (Rodri 27, Bernardo Silva 70, Haaland 76) bt Bayern Munich 0.

# Sreenidi surprises Blasters; first win for BFC

SUPER CUP

**P.K. Ajith Kumar**
KOZHIKODE

Kerala Blasters made seven changes to the eleven, only to go down to an unchanged Sreenidi Deccan in the Super Cup on Wednesday. The I-League team from Hyderabad stunned Kochi's ISL side 2-0.

It was a win to cherish for Sreenidi, which had finished runner-up in the I-League. Both the goals came in the opening half, through Rilwan Hassan and David Castaneda.

Casteneda's goal was a beauty. It started with a fine pass to the left flank from Rilwan Hassan, who scored the first goal. It was received by Soraisham Dinesh Singh, who crossed it to Castaneda. The splendid volley from the Columbian stormed past Blasters 'keeper Sachin Suresh.

**Cock-a-hoop:** Castaneda is on a high after scoring Sreenidi's second goal. K. RAGESH

Hassan's goal came off a superb pass from Phalguni Singh. The Nigerian cut into the box quickly and measured his shot precisely. The Blasters defence had already been put under pressure by Phalguni, who was such a live-wire in the opening half, in which Sreenidi clearly looked the better side. After the interval, Blasters was all over the Sreenidi half.

But Sreenidi defended stoutly, content to have all its men in its half for much of the time. After the draw with Bengaluru FC, another ISL side, in its opening match, Sreenidi can afford to dream of an unlikely place in the semifinals.

Later, Bengaluru FC scored its first win of the tournament prevailing over RoundGlass Punjab 2-0. Both goals came in the second half, from Udanta Kumam and Javi Hernandez (from the penalty spot).

**The results:**
Sreenidi Deccan 2 (Rilwan Hassan 17, David Castaneda 44) bt Kerala Blasters 0; Bengaluru FC 2 (Udanta Kumam 66, Javi Hernandez 90+6-pen) bt RoundGlass Punjab 0.

JOS' DISTINCTION

## Buttler becomes the third quickest to reach 3000 runs in the IPL

Rajasthan Royals batter Jos Buttler became the third fastest to score 3000 runs in the IPL during his knock against Chennai Super Kings in Chennai on Wednesday. He reached the milestone in his 85th innings. Chris Gayle tops the list, having crossed the 3000-run mark in 75 visits to the crease, followed by K.L. Rahul (80).

RELIEVED

## The first victory is always special, says Rohit Sharma

Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma was a relieved man after his team finally registered its first win in this edition of the IPL with a victory over Delhi Capitals. "Winning the game is the most important. We have been working hard from the first game. First win is always special," he said.

HITMAN BACK AGAIN

## Rohit finding his touch is a good sign for Mumbai Indians: Shastri

R.V. MOORTHY

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri feels Rohit Sharma's return to form augurs well for five-time champion Mumbai Indians in the ongoing IPL. Rohit scored his first fifty after 24 innings. "Rohit led the side from the front and this match-winning performance will do him, as well as MI, a world of good."

GET ON WITH IT

## Warner has been alerted about his strike-rate, reveals Axar

Delhi Capitals' Axar Patel, asked about David Warner's less-than-par scoring rate, said: "In the last couple of games, when he has tried to hit, it's not been coming off. When wickets keep falling, it's not good for him to keep attacking. Ricky (Ponting), (Shane) Watson and Sourav Ganguly have spoken to him about his strike-rate."

# Ashwin, Royals have the final say in exciting duel

The wily off-spinner has Super Kings in a spin before Jadeja and Dhoni stage a remarkable revival; the hosts, however, fall agonisingly short; Sandeep delivers for Rajasthan at the crunch

IPL-16

**Lalith Kalidas**
CHENNAI

Rajasthan Royals recorded its first win in 14 years against Chennai Super Kings at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium despite a massive M.S. Dhoni scare on Wednesday.

Leading in his 200th IPL game as CSK captain, Dhoni had a huge task as his team needed 21 in the final over. Seamer Sandeep Sharma lightened the load with a couple of wides before Dhoni carted him for two sixes.

Sandeep, however, landed his last three balls in yorker length as Royals won by three runs defending 175 on a two-paced pitch.

Sandeep had jolted CSK early in its chase when he dismissed the in-form Ruturaj Gaikwad in the third over. However, Devon Conway and Ajinkya Rahane staged a recovery, taking CSK past 50 and forcing Royals skipper Sanju Samson to shuffle the bowlers around – as many as six bowled the first seven overs.

While Conway accelerated after a slow start, Royals took a leaf out of Dhoni's book and controlled the game with spin. R. Ashwin trapped Rahane in his second over and the pressure of the chase began to cripple the CSK middle-order.

Ashwin bamboozled Shivam Dube with a quick slider to trap him in front before Yuzvendra Chahal removed Impact Player Ambati Rayudu and Conway in the 15th over.

Joining hands with Ravindra Jadeja, Dhoni (32 n.o., 17b, 1x4, 3x6) took the game deep. However, 63 runs in the last five overs proved too steep.

Earlier, Jadeja had spun the momentum CSK's way after Dhoni elected to bowl. The left-armer packed off Padikkal, inducing a miscued slog-sweep which fell into the hands of the deep square-leg fielder. The wily bowler then foxed Samson – his 200th T20 scalp – with a quicker delivery that straightened and disturbed the stumps.

Royals slid to 88 for three in the ninth over when Buttler and makeshift No. 5 Ashwin (30, 22b, 1x4, 2x6) put the innings back on track. Shimron Hetmyer's unbeaten 18-ball 30 provided the finishing touch. In the end, three runs separated Royals and Super Kings.

**Ecstasy and agony:** Sandeep's yorkers at the death crushed Chennai Super Kings' hopes despite Dhoni and Jadeja taking the fight to the Royals camp. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

SCOREBOARD

**RAJASTHAN ROYALS**
Yashasvi Jaiswal c Dube b Deshpande 10 *(8b, 2x4)*, Jos Buttler b Moeen 52 *(36b, 1x4, 3x6)*, Devdutt Padikkal c Conway b Jadeja 38 *(26b, 5x4)*, Sanju Samson b Jadeja 0 *(2b)*, R. Ashwin c Magala b Akash 30 *(22b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Shimron Hetmyer (not out) 30 *(18b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Dhruv Jurel c Dube b Akash 4 *(6b)*, Jason Holder c Conway b Deshpande 0 *(1b)*, Adam Zampa **(Impact Player in place of Buttler)** run out 1 *(1b)*; Extras (w-10): 10; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 175.

**FALL OF WICKETS**
1-11 (Jaiswal, 1.4 overs), 2-88 (Padikkal, 8.3), 3-88 (Samson, 8.5), 4-135 (Ashwin, 14.6), 5-142 (Buttler, 16.2), 6-167 (Jurel, 18.6), 7-174 (Holder, 19.5), 8-175 (Zampa, 19.6).

**SUPER KINGS BOWLING**
Akash 4-0-40-2, Deshpande 4-0-37-2, Theekshana 4-0-42-0, Jadeja 4-0-21-2, Moeen 2-0-21-1, Magala 2-0-14-0.

**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS**
Ruturaj Gaikwad c Jaiswal b Sandeep 8 *(10b, 1x4)*, Devon Conway c Jaiswal b Chahal 50 *(38b, 6x4)*, Ajinkya Rahane lbw b Ashwin 31 *(19b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Shivam Dube lbw b Ashwin 8 *(9b, 1x4)*, Moeen Ali c Sandeep b Zampa 7 *(10b)*, Ambati Rayudu **(Impact Player in place of Magala)** c Hetmyer b Chahal 1 *(2b)*, Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 25 *(15b, 1x4, 2x6)*, M.S. Dhoni (not out) 32 *(17b, 1x4, 3x6)*; Extras (lb-2, w-8): 10; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 172.

**FALL OF WICKETS**
1-10 (Ruturaj, 2.2 overs), 2-78 (Rahane, 9.3), 3-92 (Dube, 11.4), 4-102 (Moeen, 13.5), 5-103 (Rayudu, 14.1), 6-113 (Conway, 14.6).

**ROYALS BOWLING**
Sandeep 3-0-30-1, Kuldeep Sen 2-0-8-0, Holder 3-0-37-0, Zampa 4-0-43-1, Ashwin 4-0-25-2, Chahal 4-0-27-2.

**Toss:** CSK; **PoM:** R. Ashwin.
*Royals won by three runs.*

Next assignment

**RR:** April 16 **vs. GT**
*Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.*

**CSK:** April 17 **vs. RCB**
*Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.*

## We needed to rotate the strike a bit more: Dhoni

**Sports Bureau**
CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings skipper M.S. Dhoni felt the batters at the top of the order should have done more in terms of rotating the strike.

Speaking at the post-match presentation on Wednesday, Dhoni said: "I think in the middle overs, we needed a bit more strike rotation.

"There wasn't much for the spinners. They had experienced spinners, and we could not rotate the strike."

Despite the capacity crowd waiting for him to pull off one more heist, Dhoni's unbeaten 32 off 17 balls was not enough, and the Super Kings captain felt too much was left to him and Ravindra Jadeja.

"It was not that difficult, and the ownership should come from the batters. We were the last batting pair (him and Jadeja), and early in the tournament, you can't go hard, keeping the NRR in mind as there were too many overs to go.

"We kept it slightly late in the middle overs, and we couldn't go hard immediately," Dhoni added.

About his batting, Dhoni said, "I don't fancy too many things.

"I wait for the bowlers to commit a few errors. You need to back yourself, and my strength is to look to hit straight."

**On a high:** Ashwin banked on his knowledge of the local conditions to turn things Royals' way. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

## Dhoni felicitated for playing 200th game as CSK captain

**Sports Bureau**
CHENNAI

It was a special day for Chennai Super Kings skipper M.S. Dhoni, who led the side for the 200th time in the IPL on Wednesday.

Dhoni is the only player to have captained a team every year since the inaugural edition in 2008.

Ahead of the match against Rajasthan Royals, the former India skipper was felicitated by N. Srinivasan, former BCCI President.

**Good feeling**

"It feels good. The crowd has also been fantastic.

"We have seen cricket change, how T20 was played at that point in time till now, a lot has changed.

"It feels good to have survived for so long.

"It is a format (in which) we have to keep evolving," said skipper Dhoni at the toss.

**Special moment:** Former BCCI president N. Srinivasan presents Dhoni a memento. SPORTZPICS/ IPL

## Kings cannot afford slip-ups against Titans

**Go-to men:** Gill and skipper Hardik, if available, will be expected to play a key role for Titans. R.V. MOORTHY

**Ayan Acharya**
MOHALI

Gujarat Titans will aim to put its IPL 2023 campaign back on track when it faces Punjab Kings at the IS Bindra Stadium in Mohali on Thursday.

Both teams have had similar starts to the season, with GT winning two games and losing one and PBKS following the same sequence. Hardik Pandya, who was unwell and missed the last match, should be available for this encounter.

Kagiso Rabada and Liam Livingstone are available for the Kings. It remains to be seen if they will leave out an in-form Nathan Ellis for the South African quick. Livingstone can take Matt Short's place in the XI.

Kings have benefited from the form of captain Shikhar Dhawan, who has 225 runs in three matches. He has looked to bat through while others around him have gone big.

Kings' death-bowling skills have come into sharp focus. These are still early days in the season, but their death-over economy of 16.25 is the worst among the 10 sides. They can ill afford such profligacy against a Titans batting unit that goes at close to 13 runs per over at the death.

PBKS could rely on Livingstone to neutralise the Rashid Khan threat. He has smacked 119 runs off 69 balls against Rashid in T20 cricket at an astonishing strike rate of 172.46.

Points Table

| | M | W | L | Pts | NRR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rajasthan Royals | 4 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 1.588 |
| Lucknow Super Giants | 4 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 1.048 |
| Kolkata Knight Riders | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1.375 |
| Gujarat Titans | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 0.431 |
| Chennai Super Kings | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0.225 |
| Punjab Kings | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | -0.281 |
| Royal Challengers Bangalore | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | -0.800 |
| Mumbai Indians | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | -0.879 |
| Sunrisers Hyderabad | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | -1.502 |
| Delhi Capitals | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 | -1.576 |

*After the CSK-RR match on April 12*

Today's match

Mohali, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 2
PBKS 1 | GT 1

PREVIOUS MEETING
PBKS won by **eight wickets**, 2022

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA APP

## INBRIEF

### United's Rashford out for 'a few games' with injury

Marcus Rashford has been ruled out of the first leg of Manchester United's Europa League quarterfinal against Sevilla with a muscle injury, the club said on Wednesday. The England international will be sidelined for a "few games" which places doubts over his availability for the FA Cup semifinal against Brighton on April 23.

### Sony Sports extends telecast deal with UEFA till 2028

Sony Sports Network has extended its telecast deal by six years with UEFA for all competitions lasting till 2028. The Euro and other championships will remain with the broadcaster. As part of the deal, Sony Sports will telecast 1300 football matches across its channels.

### Bopanna and Ebden crash out in second round

Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden were beaten 4-6, 3-6 by Germans Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz in the second round of the Monte Carlo Masters on Wednesday. They overcame Rafael Matos and David Vega Hernandez in the first round.

**LIVE TELECAST**

**Chess World championship**: FIDE & *Chess.com YouTube* channels, 2.30 p.m. onwards
**ATP**: Monte Carlo Masters: Sony LIV, 2.30 p.m. onwards
**Super Cup football**: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 5 & 8.30 p.m.
**IPL**: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m.
**Conference League**: Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 10.30 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Friday)
**Europa League**: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3, 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday)

**Leading from the front:** Skipper Dhawan has done a commendable job at the top making up for inconsistent performances from his teammates with the bat. NAGARA GOPAL

# Dhawan— the adhesive of Kings' batting unit

His approach has re-ignited the debate about batters going deep though it could be the ideal one in a line-up filled with stroke-makers

**IPL-16**

**Ayan Acharya**
MOHALI

Punjab Kings captain Shikhar Dhawan's batting this season has reignited the T20 debate over the place of batters who look to stick around for a large part of the innings.

While getting your eye in before accelerating remains the prescribed way to build ODI innings, proponents of one view of T20 batting would dismiss the above method as an anachronism in a format where one inning constitutes 40% of the total number of balls that make up one ODI innings.

The Kings' batting unit is built around the likes of Liam Livingstone and Bhanuka Rajapaksa, who have fashioned their game on clearing the ropes regularly. But the pursuit of short, aggressive innings is fraught with risks and can backfire. That's where Dhawan has been good so far. He has managed to mitigate the implicit dangers of mounting incessant attack by attempting to bat through with a gradually increasing tempo.

It is evident in his running between the wickets and boundary-hitting. Dhawan has 225 runs in three matches, with 70% coming through boundaries and only 30 via ones and twos.

These are still early days in the season, but the signs are promising. Last year, Dhawan's running between the wickets contributed close to 44% to his overall tally. Another notable difference in Dhawan's approach has been his middle-overs strike rate. He is hitting at close to 149 between overs 7 and 16 this IPL, while it was 122.66 last season.

There are days when Dhawan's penchant to bat through will arrest the slide of wickets, like against SRH. PBKS was in danger of being dismissed for less than 100, but Dhawan carried his side with his second successive fifty.

Not to forget, given the number of times IPL playoff qualifications have hinged on Net Run Rates, it's important that Punjab has a batter who can act as a fail-safe for this boom-or-bust strategy.

# All Indian women finish on the podium in Asian wrestling

**Sports Bureau**

Antim Panghal (53kg) bagged a silver while Anshu Malik (57kg), Sonam Malik (62kg), Manisha (65kg) and Reetika (72kg) secured a bronze apiece as all the Indian women in the fray on Wednesday finished on the podium at the Asian wrestling championships in Astana.

World under-20 champion Antim defeated Singapore's Hsiao Lim 10-0, China's Li Deng 6-0 and Uzbekistan's Aktenge Keunimjaeva 'by fall' to enter the final and get her first medal in the event.

In the title clash against the 2021 World champion and defending champion Japanese Akari Fujinami, Antim lost 0-10.

Anshu got past Singapore's Danielle Lim 11-0 and China's Qi Zhang 5-4 before losing 1-5 in the semifinals to Japan's Sae Nanjo. Anshu defeated Mongolian Erdenesuvd Bat Erdene 10-0 for the bronze.

Sonam was pinned by Mongolian Orkhon Purevdorj, but banked on her 'second life' to beat the experienced China wrestler – World and Asian medallist Xiaojuan Luo – 5-1 to bag the bronze.

Manisha got the better of Mongolian Shoovdor Baatarjav 2-1 and Uzbekistan's Ariukhan Jumabaeva 'by fall' before suffering a 0-11 reverse against China's Lia Long. Manisha was pinned by Japanese Mahiro Yoshitake in the semifinals before bouncing back to trounce Kazakh Albina Kairgeldinova 'by fall' for the third spot.

Reetika beat Kyrgyzstan's Nurzat Nurtaeva 6-3 but went down fighting 4-5 against Japan's Sumire Niikura in the last-four clash. She then recorded a 5-1 victory over Uzbekistan's Svetlana Oknazarova to pocket the bronze.

# Rutuja pilots India to a 3-0 victory over Uzbekistan

**BILLIE JEAN KING CUP**

**Sports Bureau**

Rutuja Bhosale gave a rousing start that eventually drove India to a 3-0 victory over host Uzbekistan in the Asia-Oceania Billie Jean King Cup women's tennis tournament in Tashkent on Wednesday.

Rutuja fought her way past Sabrina Olimjanova 5-7, 6-2, 6-4 in the opening singles. Thereafter, Ankita Raina beat Sevil Yuldasheva in straight sets.

With the tie sealed, captain Shalini Thakur Chawla fielded Shrivalli Bhamidipaty and Vaidehi Chaudhari for the doubles. The Indian pair outplayed the Uzbeks 6-1, 6-0, to put the icing on the cake for India's second victory in as many matches.

**Powering through:** Rutuja came from a set down to beat Olimjanova in the opening singles. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

There was a surprise as the formidable China was beaten 2-1 by Korea, with Kim Dabin beating Yang Zhaoxuan in three sets.

It meant that Japan, which beat Thailand 2-1 for its second win, and India level at the top with two wins each. India will next play China on Thursday.

**The results (league):** India bt Uzbekistan 3-0 (Rutuja Bhosale bt Sabrina Olimjanova 5-7, 6-2, 6-4; Ankita Raina bt Sevil Yuldasheva 6-4, 6-2; Shrivalli Bhamidipaty & Vaidehi Chaudhari bt Moftunabonu Kahramonova & Ominahon Valihanova 6-1, 6-0).

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